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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains materials designed to help parents develop "parenting" skills during the years when the child is at home prior to entering school. Areas covered by the materials include rainy day activities, home safety, nutrition and health, creativity in young children, baby sitters, various aspects of child development, family crises, and reading readiness. In addition, specific recipes and directions for creating toys and activities for infants and toddlers, and a copy of "Your Child--From Home to School: Handbook for Parents Whose Child Is Entering School" (which examines facets of early home-school conflicts) is included. The final section contains brief guidelines for parents to use in observing, helping, and working with their young children. Lists of resources and reading materials for parents are also included. (ED)

ED107344

DEC. 6 1974

Take The Time To Make The Difference . . .

# TOTLINE TIDBITS

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A special packet of materials prepared by:
Committee on the young child
EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
MILLERSVILLE STATE COLLEGE
MILLERSVILLE, PENNA. 17551

PS 007694

The Millersville State College Educational Development Center received a special grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the purpose of conducting a statewide assessment of needs in Early Childhood Education.

Initially, the grant involved the establishment of a Committee on the Young Child, representing a cross section of the population in Pennsylvania, with expertise in Early Childhood Education.

One of the first tasks of the Committee included the conducting of a needs assessment of early childhood programs in various agencies and schools in the Commonwealth.

The single most important need seemed to be that of informing parents how they might better fulfill their role of "parenting" during the critical years when the child is at home prior to entering school.

The Committee decided that they could best meet this need through the use of television, radio and the printed word.

Spot announcements were prepared for television and radio to begin August 1, 1974. In these announcements parents were given a toll-free "TOTLINE" number which they could call for a free packet of informative materials pertaining to the role of "parenting."

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To Mr. John L. Kennedy, Director, Bureau of Planning and Evaluation, Pennsylvania Department of Education, for his many suggestions and contributions.

To Mrs. Charlotte Garman, Senior Program Advisor, Early Childhood Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education, for her guidance, wisdom and inspiration.

To the administration and staff of Millersville State College for providing support.

To Mrs. Erma Long and the Steno Services Department at Millersville State College a special "thank you" for helping to prepare this packet of information.

To Mr. Edward Hall, Printing and Duplicating, a special "thank you" for printing this packet of information.

To Research and Information Services for Education (R.I.S.E.), 198 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, for conducting an education search for the Committee and providing many of the materials contained in the following packet of information.

To Mrs. Paula Stoup a special accolade for coordinating the production of the spot announcements for radio and television and for her role in helping to prepare this packet of information.

The members of this Committee hope that in some small way the philosophy of Mrs. Elsie Hostetter, former Professor of Education at Millersville State College, is reflected in these materials. For the Committee, Mrs. Hostetter represented that rare combination of "professional teacher" and sensitive "human being" who was able to inspire others interested in young children.

# PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD DEVELOP

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# Rainy Day Ideas

Make animals, people, etc. from pipe cleaners.

Make and do puzzles.

String large beads.

Use play money.

Go shopping in a mall.

Make a tent with an old curtain, sheet or blanket draped over a card table.

Make a musical wind instrument with a comb and tissue paper.

Make puppets from old socks.

Plant seeds in paper cups.

Cut & paste scraps of old fabric.

Paint with watercolors.

Play geometric games.

Straighten the drawers that contain his clothing.

Listen to the radio.

Use cardboard boxes like blocks.

Play dress-up.

Make a musical string instrument with rubber bands across a box.

Make a tambourine from 2 paper plates stapled together. Tie on bells or pop bottle tops with holes punched through centers.

Cut pictures from magazines and paste them on paper.

Play with building blocks.

Use bean bags.

Play number games.

Watch T.V.

Invite a child to play. Call the friend on the telephone.

Dance to a favorite song on the stereo. Pin old scarves to the waistline to make a dancing skirt.

Use modeling clay.

Make button pictures.

Blow bubbles. Use a drinking straw for a blower.

Learn to tie a bow.

Give the child a manicure and pedicure. Polish little girl's nails and mommy's too.

# Rainy Day Ideas

Make puppets from paper bags.

Draw pictures of the rain.

Read and listen to stories.

Look through a catalog.

Sail boats in the bathtub.

Make cookies

Scrub the sink for Mother.

Play store.

Use balloons to make animals and people.

Have own drums with pots and wooden spoons.

Make and fly paper airplanes.

Make decorations for the next holiday.

Learn a new song.

Use finger paint....Recipe

1 qt. boiling water
3 cups laundry starch
1 1/2 cups soap flakes
1/2 cup talcum powder
Poster paint - powdered

# FOSTERING CREATIVITY

## Reach Touch Feel

Awareness is an important part of being creative. This attitude of perceptiveness is one of the dominant characteristics of creative people, yet it can be developed in everyone.

Most children are, by nature, quite observant because they have been dependent on their senses to learn about their environment. One of the most important things an adult can do for this growing child is to encourage him to retain and expand his awareness and sensitivity. To do this adults need to become more observant of their world because it's not unusual for a child to point out something the adult passed right over.

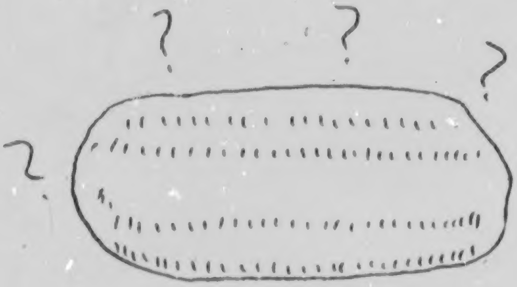
Adults can help the child develop his natural curiosity by helping him discover things in each of the senses. Rather than telling him what he is discovering we should encourage him to tell us about it. For example, encourage the child to smell the difference between a dandelion, a rose, and the flowers at Grandma's house, etc. Can he tell what is for supper tonight by the smells coming from the kitchen?

Children also enjoy tasting experiences which might be as simple as having a preschooler name his morning juice without first seeing what color it is. Children enjoy telling whether something is salty or sweet or sour, and many times a taste game will encourage them to try new or unusual foods.

A touch bag is a fun activity that stimulates a child's awareness of how things feel. Put a common object in a bag and ask the child to put his hand into the bag and try to tell what the object is without peeking. For a school age child you might try putting a number of things in the bag at once - how about a variety of vegetables and fruits? In this game the child explores texture, shape, and weight.

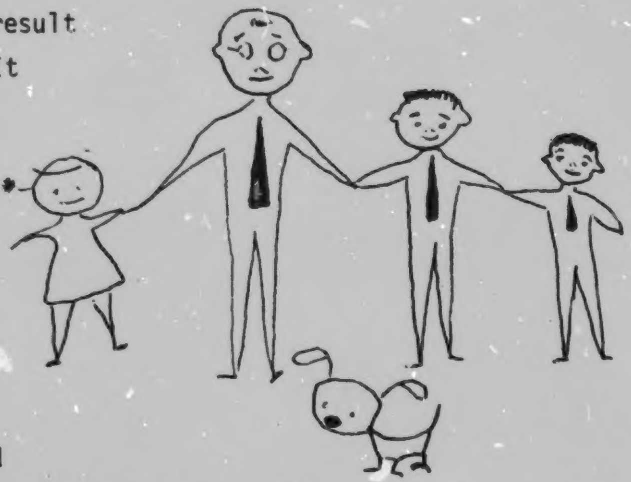
A "look-listen" walk around the block is a good thing to share with children. Everyone can practice being more aware of all the things there are to see and listen to right within the neighborhood. You might be surprised at the things you never noticed. A game of "What do you see" will amuse the child as well as help everyone develop their awareness.

The following nursery school experience is a good example of developing awareness as well as stimulating curiosity. Into the nursery school classroom was brought a sack containing an unidentified object. The children were asked to guess what it was without peeking into the bag. They felt, pushed, pulled, and even attempted to lift the object. It took several children to lift the sack. Eventually the object was revealed to be a watermelon and the children were asked what they thought (some had never had watermelon) or remembered what it was like inside. Discussion got around to how were they going to get inside to get a taste. Numerous suggestions were made by the children including dropping it to break it. Finally watermelon was enjoyed by all. Compare the difference in learning from that situation to a situation where the teacher says "We're going to have watermelon today. I've cut each of you a piece."



As you can see the biggest part of awareness involves simply taking the "time" to notice. Everyone can make the choice to be aware thereby developing his creativity.

# THE ONE PARENT FAMILY



The one parent family may result from a variety of situations. It may be due to widowhood, divorce, separation or one who is unmarried. If these types of one parent families were to be ranked according to acceptance by society at large, they would probably be ranked in the above order. Thus the one parent family who is widowed feels relatively secure in her environment, while the one parent unmarried family feels rejected by society.

There is little doubt that the absence of one parent affects family functioning in a wide variety of ways. The nature or type of family breakup or crisis will help to explain the behavior of the members of the resulting single parent family. When a marriage is ended, whether by death, separation, desertion or divorce, the now single parent must face a complete reorientation in his life. He makes all major decisions virtually on his own, with no partner to present another viewpoint. Common to most of the one parent families are problems of financing, child rearing, maintaining a satisfying social life and emotional problems of adjustment to single parenthood.

And what of the children? When the marriage has ended, what kind of adjustments must they make? "Parents Without Partners" list their childrens fear of being different, of being left out of the main stream, as the largest problem.

Every child's life is bound to be disrupted from time to time by crisis of one kind or another of major or minor severity. While each situation may vary, our ability and the child's capacity to deal effectively with each life crisis, largely determines its effect on the child.

Note: As a further reference, secure from your local library: Arnstein, Helen S., What to Tell Your Child About Birth, Death, Illness & Other Crisis, New York; Pocket Books, 1964.

Where can the single parent turn for help? There are several organizations which have developed to try to meet some of the needs of the single parent through mutual understanding, help, and companionship. Because the programs usually differ from chapter to chapter one should contact their local chapter for detailed information. These organizations include: Parents Without Partners and Single Parents Society. Other community services and organizations which may be of help are: Children and Family Service, Parent-Child Centers, Mental Health Centers.

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# THE PATHWAY TO GOOD NUTRITION

## The Basic Four Food Groups

No single food contains all the substances necessary for the normal growth of children. Therefore, choosing wisely for children's diets means selecting foods from all four of the Basic Four Food Groups.

The foods are divided into groups to point out the main kinds of foods to include in the meals each day. Foods are also divided into groups on the basis of their nutritional contributions to the diet of everyone.

The Basic Four Food Groups include the Meat Group, the Bread and Cereal Group, the Vegetable and Fruit Group and the Milk Group.

### The Meat Group

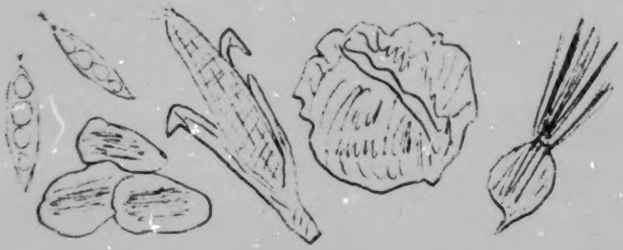
Meats provide the essential nutrients needed for growing tall, for building muscles, for important body functions and for the formation of hemoglobin in the red blood cells. The nutrients that provide these building blocks are protein, the B vitamins and iron. Meat substitutes that can be used instead of meat and still provide the important nutrients are fish, chicken, peanut butter, and eggs. Cheese also is a good source of protein.

CEREAL
FLOUR
MIX

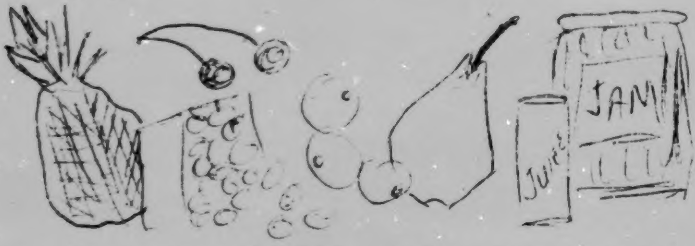
### The Bread and Cereal Group

Bread and cereals are good sources of energy for the endless activity of children. Breads and cereals are valuable sources of iron and B vitamins and also contain protein. Other important foods in this group are enriched cornmeal & converted rice.

## The Vegetable and Fruit Group

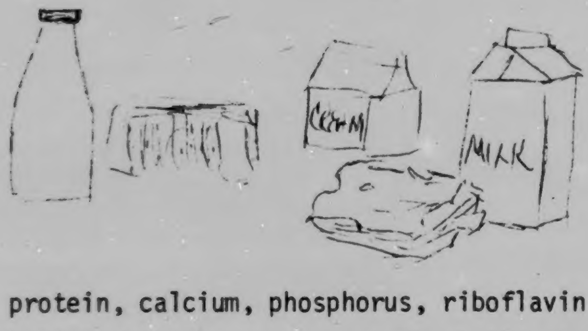


The color, flavor, and varied texture of fruits and vegetables add much to the enjoyment of eating. But vegetables and fruits add a variety of values to the body.



These foods furnish vitamins C and A and contribute as roughage in the body. Vitamin C helps build and maintain healthy gums, body tissues and blood vessels, helps resist infection and aids in healing. Vitamin A is important for normal vision and to keep skin and mucous membranes healthy.

## The Milk Group



Milk contains protein, calcium, phosphorus, riboflavin, vitamin A and vitamin D is fortified which promote growth, build strong bones and teeth, provide energy, and help maintain smooth, healthy skin and good eyesight.

## NURSERY SCHOOL - IS YOUR CHILD READY?

Preschool services are avilable in a variety of programs under different names. Generally taking children from about ages 2 to 6, a good center helps to provide safe and healthy care, promote physical, emotional and social development and satisfy a child's natural desire to learn.

Regardless of whether you plan to keep your child at home or take him to some type of child center, every child has specific needs which include opportunities to learn and to master new skills; experiences which help the child to become sociable, confident and to develop self-esteem; planned but flexible routines which contribute to a sense of security and gradually lead to self-discipline; and most importantly people who care about him as a person.

So, if you are thinking about a child care center, you might be asking yourself, "Is my child ready to go to a nursery school? Should every Johnny go to a center? or Just because Susie has had that 'magic' birthday, does that mean she is ready for a preschool center experience?"

Remember: Each child is an individual. Although he may have reached the qualifying chronological age, this is not always the age at which a child is ready for a preschool center.

What parents do to help a small child in learning to enter a new situation feeling happy, self confident, optimistic, curious and friendly means far more than pushing a child's mental skills and memorization of facts. Talk about nursery school and what will happen; give your child opportunities to play with other children; structure the setting; separate the child from the parents for short periods of time. All of these factors will help your child develop self confidence and be at ease with new children and new situations.

One of the most important skills to look for to determine a child's readiness is the degree of independence the child possesses. Must your child ask for approval from you for everything he does? Must you initiate all play activities for him? An independent child functions on his own. He may ask permission to do certain things but for the most part he knows the rules you have set down and can follow them. He is able to initiate his own play activity and can make himself a part of the group.

Verbal ability is another factor. That is, can your child make his wants and needs known verbally? Can he tell you he is hungry, tired, or must go to the bathroom?

Curiosity is a very important factor also. Is your child showing you that he needs more stimulation than what the home alone can provide? Does he show you that he is interested in developing concepts and ideas?

Lastly, toilet training is a must for children going into pre-school centers. We all expect occasional "accidents" with young children. However, the child should be toilet trained and be able to tell you when he must go to the bathroom.

Please remember that age alone does not determine center readiness. The important skills to look for in your child are:

Independence
Verbal ability
Curiosity
Social & Emotional readiness through parents help
Toilet Training

## CREATIVE ODDS AND ENDS

Children can express their feelings, ideas, and interests through creative art experiences. They learn to rely on their own personal taste and judgment and to take pride in their own efforts. Art activities also help develop coordination and manipulative skills. Children need to work in many media--to explore the properties and possibilities of each. A variety of art materials--crayons, papers, scissors, chalk, paste and collage bits should be available for your child's use.

Cut magazine pictures into pieces and paste them at random to make a "collage" design. The word "collage" comes from the French and means paste. Children like to cut and paste. They can do it with no real guidance, but, with a little help from you, collage can be an even better learning experience--a 3-year-old can begin to cut and paste.

To help your child, you can:

.....Cut magazine pictures into pieces and paste at random to make a design.

.....Cut out things by color. For example, all the things that are yellow. This helps a child learn colors, and is fun, too.

.....Children love scrapbooks. A category scrapbook is fun--one page for cars, one page for foods, one page for toys, or pages with other meanings--of things which have wheels, or windows, or doors, things we have in our homes, things we see in a grocery store, or on the farm.

Paper and crayons are good tools from which children learn manipulation. At first, a very young child will seem content just to experiment with materials and movement on a large paper surface. Then, one day he will start to name his creations. Do not force a child to name his work. You should not name it for him. If he asks you what it is, describe it--a sunny, happy picture--or a green background with red, or a red and blue picture. All kinds of paper have possibilities. Unprinted newspaper is the cheapest. Cut it in half or quarters as needed. A sheet 18" x 24" seems right for a small child's project. Save colored papers from gift wrappings, too and from attractive packages. An assortment of colored manila paper has special charm. Don't forget

construction paper. Things other than paper are good as collage:

For 2 year olds - Cloth, paper clips, dirt, plastic flowers, sand, ribbon, leaves, magazine pictures, string.

For 4 to 5 year olds - Yarn, cloth, buttons, thread, rubber bands, dried flowers, pipe cleaners, cellophane tape, bottle caps, magazine pictures, macaroni, fabric, seeds, rice.

Blunt end scissors are a must if little hands are doing cutting. Be sure that the paints, crayons and paste that your child uses are edible. Small children often put their hands into their mouths and you don't want to hamper their creativity by constantly reminding them to keep their hands away from their mouths.

It's all right to rule the living room "out-of-bounds" for paint, paste and clay. Children prefer a few clear cut house rules to continuous nagging to "be careful".

Living creatively starts from ideas. Children are full of ideas. They are eager to express them. They must express their ideas if they are to live fully as a child and later as an adult. Creativity is individuality. If you value each individual child, then, you will be valuing creativity. Every child wants to be himself and to do things for himself.

If you would like to read more on children's creativity, there is a book that costs 55 cents that you can buy and read. It is called, A Creative Life for Your Children. Order it from Manager, Public Documents Distribution Center, 5801 Tabor Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19120. Include the 55¢, the name of the book and number HE 21.114:1 S/N 1791-0138.

# HOW DOES YOUR CHILD SEE?

Did you know that one in every twenty pre-school age children in United States has a vision problem? If it is not corrected, it can interfere with his development and education. It is particularly important to recognize and treat this before school age, especially those with "lazy eyes".

A child may think that everyone else sees the way he does. Often he doesn't realize he has a vision problem. You may want to give your child a home eye test. This does not take the place of a professional eye examination, but it is a good place to start. If you would like a free copy of this "Home Test for Preschoolers", write to Prevent Blindness, 79 Madison Avenue, New York, 10016.

## WATCH FOR THESE SIGNS OF EYE TROUBLE IN CHILDREN

### Appearance

Crossed eyes

Red-rimmed, encrusted or swollen eyelids

Inflamed or watery eyes

Recurring styes

### Complaints

Eyes itch, burn or feel scratchy

Cannot see well

Dizziness, headaches, or nausea following close eye work

Blurred or double vision

Aching, smarting or tired eyes

IF YOU NOTICE any of the above signs, take your child to a family physician, pediatrician, eye specialist, health department or clinic.

### Behavior

Rubs eyes excessively

Shuts or covers one eye

Has difficulty in reading or in other work requiring close use of the eyes

Blinks more than usual or is irritable when doing close work

Stumbles over small objects

Holds books close to eyes

Is unable to see distant things clearly

Squints eyelids together or frowns

Cocks head to one side when looking at something carefully or thrusts head forward

An infant can focus on a person or objects several months after birth. By the third or sixth month, you will notice how he is able to fix his eyes on an object. However, wandering movements of the eyes will be present until he is twelve to eighteen months. A child has almost complete development of his vision by two to three years of age. It is important for the doctor to check the eyes of every three year old. If his eyesight is found to be poor, remedies can be initiated and very often vision can be restored to normal. If the child is not treated by age seven, it may be too late to correct sight in the affected eye.

Children with uncorrected vision may tend to avoid playing with others and sometimes can be considered mentally retarded. Early treatment is important not only for improvement of vision but also for social adjustment.

It is safe for a child to use his eyes extensively provided they are used under proper conditions. Watching television has no harmful effect on the eyes but to prevent fatigue, the room should be moderately lighted.

Remember to protect your child's vision--take him to the doctor if you notice any signs of eye trouble or have his eyes examined by the age of three. Don't put off until tomorrow what you should do today!

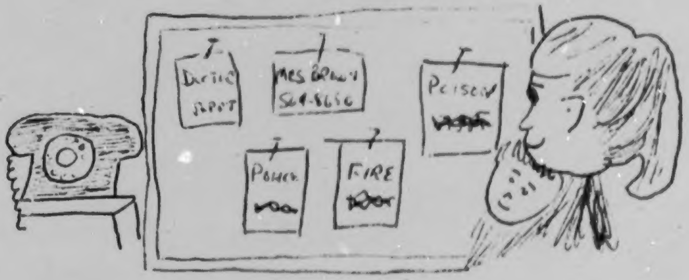
## CHOOSING A SITTER

Whenever an incompetent person of any age is left to care for children while the parents are away, the children are in danger.

As a parent are you aware of the qualities that help make a person competent to care for your children? Do you hire a sitter whose qualifications you know? Do you talk over your standards of child care with your sitter so that as she or he stays with your children, he can strive toward these standards?

The following are qualities which child care specialists feel that every person who cares for children should have in some degree:

1. Your baby sitter should like and enjoy children, especially your children.
2. However, just loving children isn't enough. The sitter should also know something about children - babies, two-year-olds, six-year-olds, etc. - and how to care for them.
3. The sitter should be able to supervise your children's activities with as little change in routine as possible. The younger the child the more important this is.
4. The person should be mature enough to meet emergencies, should any arise. He or she should be at least of high school age.
5. The sitter should be in good physical and mental health.
6. The sitter should be businesslike when making arrangements for the job and should make sure she understands the responsibilities connected with it.
7. The sitter should be acquainted with the children even if they are supposed to be asleep during the time that you are gone.
8. The baby sitter should have sufficient resources to keep your children happy as well as safe while you are away.



It is also important that the parents assume certain responsibilities, too. As employers, you should:

1. Select a level-headed, dependable sitter, old enough and capable of doing the job.
2. Acquaint the sitter with the household including the physical set-up, family members, pets, family customs, etc.
3. Be specific in regard to business arrangements. Live up to agreements. Decide on the time the baby sitter is to come, approximate length of time he is to stay, the amount to be paid, and what is expected of the sitter (feed the child, wash dishes, etc.). Also make sure there is a clear understanding about how the sitter may use the home: whether or not, he may have guests, and whom, use of radio, telephone, television, what food may be eaten.
4. Give instructions as to what to tell strangers who telephone or come to the door; what to do about items delivered or collections to be made; whether paperboy, milkman, etc. are expected.

   Provide written instructions on care of children, including how to handle any special behavior problems, where parents and other relatives may be reached and other emergency phone numbers.

6. Tell your children that you are leaving and that someone is coming to stay with them. Train them to cooperate with the sitter.
7. Provide for the sitter's safe return home.

For a listing of information to leave with your baby sitter refer to "Baby Sitters" included in last winter's packet of Toddler Topics or contact your Extension home economist for a copy.

Selecting your sitter carefully and fulfilling your share of the responsibilities will help your children have a safe and happy time while you are away from home.

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day
And as my fingers pressed it, still
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again, when days were passed
That bit of clay was hard at last,
That form I gave it, still it bore,
And I could change that form no more.

Then I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it, day by day,
And moulded with my power and art
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone,
It was a man I looked upon.
He still that early impress bore,
And I could change it, nevermore.

(Author unknown)

## USING CLAY

Making shapes with clay provides a child with many opportunities for both creative and sensory experiences. Children enjoy clay's damp feeling. They like to handle it by pounding, poking holes, rolling, pulling apart and playing. Most children really like to do messy things with their hands. Let your child play with the clay. When he is ready to mold, he will. Playing with clay is a satisfactory and legitimate way for them to have this sensory experience. Sometimes a child who has been subjected to very high standards of cleanliness will not be happy to use clay when he first sees it. However, if the opportunity comes again, or if he sees another child having fun with clay, he might joint in and really learn from this experience.

Four-year-olds often like to "make things"..wonderful things like pies, snakes, hot dogs, or other flat or round objects. Remember, it is not necessary that they make a finished product--only that they are satisfied with what they have done. There is value in the creative activity, not the product.

When your child plays with clay, remember to cover the table. Heavy plastic makes a good cover. This makes cleaning easier. Give the child a lump of clay about the size of a large apple. Let him experiment any way that interests him. Do not allow the child to put the clay into his mouth or throw it on the floor. It is better to use the hands for modeling. Molds, sticks, or other accessories detract from the creative and sensory experience. An apron will save your child's clothing.

The kitchen table, or any low table is a good place to work. If you have time, you may sit with the child and mold something yourself. Do not make objects for the child to copy. Do not tell the child what to make. This would destroy his creative experience. Remember, insist that the child stay at the table while molding clay. If you are using real clay and your child is especially proud of his sculpture, you may let it dry, then let him paint it with poster paint...if he wants it colored. You may shellac it too. When the fun from this activity is dwindling and your child's interest is distracted, you can store the clay. Make it into balls about the size of an apple. Poke a hole in each ball and fill it with water. Or, put it in a covered container with a wet sponge. Clay will become moldy if it is too wet, and hard to handle if too dry.

Clay Substitutes - Some that you can make:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 c. flour<br>1/2 c. salt<br>1/3 c. water<br>Vegetable dye, show card colors | In a saucepan, mix the ingredients. Use your fingers. Knead. One tsp. sodium benzoate may be added to this mixture as a preservative. Keep refrigerated. Children can mix this themselves. |
| 1 c. flour<br>1/2 c. salt<br>1 tsp. powdered alum<br>1/2 c. water | Mix together. Color if you like with art colors or vegetable dye. Keep in a covered container. |

Sawdust Dough

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 c. sawdust<br>3 c. flour<br>1 c. salt<br>water as needed | This dough dries very hard and is not as breakable as other 3 dimensional materials. |

## Cornstarch Dough

1 c. cornstarch
2 c. baking soda
1 1/4 c. cold water
food coloring

Mix cornstarch and baking soda together in a saucepan until blended. Add water and coloring. Stir until smooth. Cook to boiling over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil 1 min. or until mixture reaches moist mashed potato consistency. Cool and knead. This dough dries very hard.

## Molding Dough

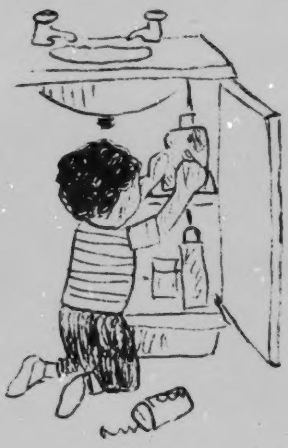
1 c. salt
1/2 c. cornstarch
1/2 c. boiling water

Mix salt, cornstarch and water in a pan. Heat over low fire, stirring constantly until mixture is too stiff to stir. Cool, and knead until smooth.

# PROTECTING THE TODDLER

As your child grows, you will need to change your ways of keeping him SAFE.

Remember that most children learn to do things before their parents expect them to do them. If you think your child can only walk, he will probably run and climb before you know it. Plan ahead to keep him SAFE. He is probably also in the exploring stage. Whether he is one or six years old, you will need to take extra precautions to keep poisons out of reach. Here are some other dangers to watch for at different ages.



ONE TO TWO YEARS: Keep household poisons and medicines locked away. Never leave medicines in the child's bedroom, on tables, or in your purse where he can reach it. Do not call medicines candy. Don't leave a child alone in a room with medicines or cleaning supplies, even for a moment.

TWO TO THREE YEARS: Go on keeping poisons locked up. A child this old can begin to learn that not everything is good to eat or put into his mouth.

THREE TO FIVE YEARS: This child is starting to explore his neighborhood and roam away from home. He may find dangerous things in cans, sacks, and bottles. Teach him to ask you if they're safe to play with or to leave them alone. Know where your child is and where he plays and how.

All growing children are curious about things that shine, pretty colored pill bottles, and containers of all kinds. It's up to you to keep your child from hurting himself.

The most common causes of accidental death between ages one to five are: motor vehicles, fires, drowning, and poisoning.

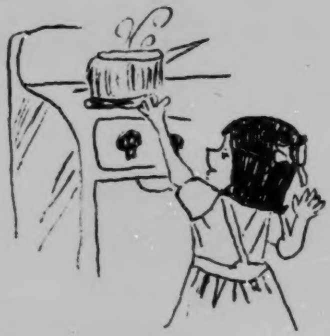
PREVENTING MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS: Repeated warnings against running into driveways and streets, chasing objects off the lawn, and crossing the street may not be sufficient to prevent accidents. The toddler must be told why he should not run into the street.

PREVENTING BURNS AND FIRES: Keep matches and cigarette lights out of reach; turn handles of cooking utensils to rear of stove or use back burners; keep cords of electrical appliances out of a child's reach, whether or not they are connected; put safety caps on all unused electric outlets and keep fireplace screens in place.

PREVENTING DROWNINGS: Don't leave a child alone in a bathtub--not even for an instant; never leave a child alone near wading pools, swimming pools, brooks, creeks, cisterns, wells, rivers, lakes, or at the beach.

Part of the responsibility for a young child's safety rests with older children in the family. You will have to impress them with the importance of keeping dangerous things out of reach and helping to keep a watchful eye on the toddler.

Children of all ages do need to be encouraged to follow their curiosity and interests in their own way. Try to keep the don't to a minimum (don't touch--don't climb). Constant threats make some toddlers afraid of every new situation. It may help to provide interesting toys and safe play materials and leave only safe household objects where he can handle them.



All of these protective measures may be a nuisance but no price is too high to insure a child's safety.

# FOSTERING CREATIVITY

## Painting and Drawing

Many a parent has probably said to himself "How can I teach my child to draw and paint when I can't even draw." Such parents can rest assured that knowledge of how to draw or paint is not necessary to teach a child. More important for parents to know are some facts about the general stages of art development in children and what is an appropriate attitude about creativity.

### How to Think About Art and Creativity

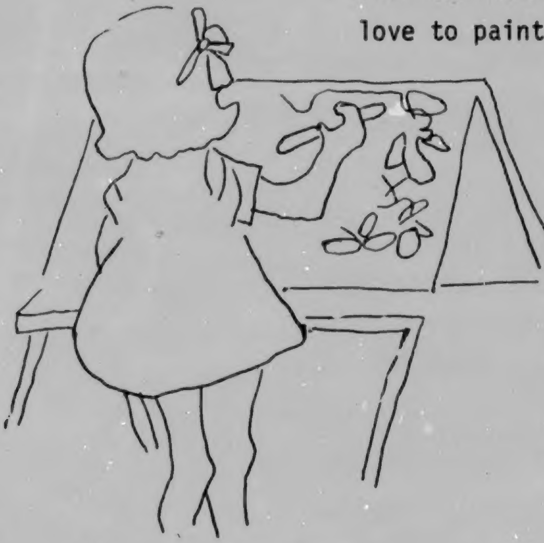
Children's drawings are often confusing, distorted, and vague to adults -- yet have great validity for the child, because the child works mostly with sensations, while adults are more concerned with line, proportion and reality in art. If you as an adult can keep in mind that for the child the PROCESS of painting or drawing is more fun and more important than the PRODUCT then you will be able to be a more appreciative audience. Rather than commenting on errors in detail or distorted sizes, look for an attractive color or movement or ask the child if he had fun creating the drawing. The question "What is it?" should be banned if you really will accept the fact that a child may express himself in color and line without making a describable or realistic object.

### All Creativity Starts with Scribbles

Scribbling is the very beginning of creativity for children. Beginning scribbles are simply random marks - it's the child's way of finding out what it feels and looks like when he makes a mark or something. (It should be noted here that parents must be quick to anticipate the beginning of the scribbling stage so they can provide large scribbling paper to prevent scribbling on walls, etc. Fat crayons are also good for small hands that don't have much control over the small finger muscles.) With practive and experimentation the scribbles will become more controlled. This goes hand in hand with increasing muscular control. Sometime between the ages of 4 and 8 children usually develop enough control to begin making simple figures and objects. Showing a child how to draw, or improve his scribbles will only frustrate or inhibit him. The child is drawing his impressions of the world so a particularly meaningful object may be exaggerated in proportion. Through repetition he will refine his drawings as well as increasing their scope.

Your Child and Painting

At about age 3 the child is ready to begin painting. Children who show no interest at all in crayoning sometimes love to paint. The secret of success in painting as far as Mother is concerned is to set up routine and rules for painting. Painting need not be messy if you show the child the procedure, and supervise him until the habits are are formed. Here is what you'll need.



SPACE TO WORK - a low table or the floor will do. Spread newspapers on the work surface and put the paint in muffin pans. Even more desirable is an easel. You need not buy this. You can make a satisfactory one by hinging two pieces of plywood together at the top and mounting both pieces on legs. Attach a box to hold the paint.

APRON - covering to protect the child's clothing is desirable. Try a simple plastic apron, or remove the collar and shorten sleeves of a discarded man's shirt, put tucks in the shoulders, and put it on the child with the buttons down the back.

PAPER - make it about 18 by 24 inches. It may be wrapping paper or the back of wallpaper, or unprinted newspaper - it is inexpensive and holds the paint well.

BRUSHES - provide one brush for each color, then it won't be necessary to wash the brushes until the end of the painting time. Easel brushes should have bristles about 1 inch long, and handles about 10 inches long.

PAINT - should be washable. It may be called tempera paint, showcard paint, poster paint, art colors, etc., and usually comes in a jar, already mixed. You may also obtain it in powder form and mix it yourself. This is less expensive if you use a great deal of paint.

## ???? COLORING BOOKS ????

Coloring books are often mistakenly thought to be sources of art expression for children. Actually a coloring book give no chance for original design and some even tell what colors to use, eliminating the one limited opportunity for choice. With a second look at coloring books we might better say that chances for creativity are really stifled by coloring books. Sometimes people think that children will develop muscle coordination by coloring within the lines of the coloring book. That's true but practice in nearly every activity helps develop muscle coordination - for example tying shoelaces, putting blocks together, etc.

## THE PATHWAY TO GOOD NUTRITION

### Foods Best For Children

Children two - six years of age should have the following proportions of the Basic Four Food Groups daily:

Milk - 2 to 3 cups - used as a beverage and in cooked food.
Flavorings could also be added for varieties in taste.
Fruits and Vegetables - 1/2 cup orange juice or any juice; 1/2 - 1 orange Fruit cut into small pieces; 4 - 5 tablespoons (small servings) of vegetables
Meats - 2 small servings (1 1/2 - 2 ounces)
Breads and Cereals - 1/2 to 3/4 cup cold or hot cereal; 2 - 3 slices of bread

Your child should have nutritious food - but -

- Food likes and dislikes vary, but there are many foods. For example, if he does not like spinach, use other greens.
- Appetites vary among children. Some eat heartily, others more slowly and smaller amounts. Don't make an issue of it, because all children are not "cut" by the same pattern.
- Proteins, vitamins, minerals, and calories are always needed. Growth factors affect amounts needed. Rapid growth takes place in infancy. Rate slows down at 2 or 3, then gradually increases.
- Preparation methods vary with age. As the child grows older, less bland foods, more raw foods and foods "from the table" may be used.

## Make Mealtimes Interesting for Your Child

Children like a colorful plate with bits of garnish and surprises.
Variety in texture makes meals more attractive.
Serve strong flavored vegetables with a milk-flavored meal.
Cut, shred and chop meats into small bite-sized pieces.
Make servings small.
Introduce new foods in small amounts with other familiar foods.
Children like foods they can eat with their fingers.
Allow the preschooler to feed himself.

## HELPING YOUR CHILD TO SPEAK

When your child is learning to talk remember that he is a child, and developing many skills at the same time. Do not call direct attention to a child's difference in speech - making fun of him will not force him to speak better. Nagging your child about his performance may only cause anxiety which could retard normal speech growth.

If your child mispronounces a word, repeat the words correctly in your answer to him. If he hears it said properly, when he's ready he will imitate you. For example, if he says "Wook at the kitty," you should answer, "Yes, let's look at the kitty." Children can become very frustrated if forced to pronounce words correctly.

Read to your child and talk to him about pictures. But keep your sentences simple. Books and stories can be very valuable to the child's speech development. Select short, simple stories for the 2 and 3 year old child, and expect to read them over and over again. They like to hear about everyday events and people. A child will love a story you make up about his daily experiences, but he will want you to repeat it exactly as you told it before! As children grow older, they like books about insects and shells, fire engines and dinosaurs, stories of faraway lands, and olden times. They can understand a more involved plot. But, the characters should be doing things the child knows about so he can understand their actions. For this reason some authorities think that preschool children are not ready for fairy tales yet. They can't tell fact from fiction as yet, and wicked witches, dragons, and animals that change into people may scare them. A good book will be loved first by the child, which he should be encouraged to talk about. It should also be enjoyed when read aloud, and rediscovered at 8 or 9 when a child can read by himself. Not all children's books are good books; select one that is carefully written and skillfully illustrated.

Take every opportunity to talk with your child. Listen to what he has to say, not the way he says it. Let him express his thoughts freely. See that he has a variety of experiences so that he has something to talk with you about: reading, museums, parks, fishing, visiting farm, or any other activities like these.

Help your child develop an interest in sounds and an ability to listen. Call attention to familiar sounds a child hears: a dog barking, a clock ticking, a bell ringing. Point out the differences between sounds and encourage him to discriminate between them: the bark of a dog and the meow of the cat, the telephone bell and the door bell. Begin with widely different sounds and progress to similar ones. Have the child discriminate between sounds that are near or far, high or low, and loud or soft. Start with familiar sounds.

Look at pictures of animals, trains, cars, etc. with the child naming them and imitating the sounds they make. Ask him to identify them by the sounds. Later help the child to distinguish different sounds by setting up play situations with pictures of objects that sound approximately alike. For instance - cat, hat, bat, mat. By building up a booklet of these pictures, he can identify the right picture when it is named.

Speech is not an isolated skill that all children learn instinctively, but one that a child learns as part of his whole development process - all of a child's experiences are important to his speech learning.

## LEARNING TO TALK

In infancy, a child amuses himself with throaty noises and bubbles, coos, and chuckles. As time goes by, he hears a great deal of talking around him. In play, he begins to imitate the rhythm of the language he hears, although his sounds are meaningless.

Around six months of age, children can repeat some of the sounds they have heard. By about one year old, because of attention he got when making a sound and having it repeated back to him, he begins to relate it with an object or person.

During the toddler years a child is not only learning to master his body, through walking, climbing, and using his hands, he is also learning to form words and to use these words for objects he wants or sees. Both these efforts - walking and talking - seem to require a great energy and concentration. Many children do not acquire these two skills at the same time. The child who talks early and well, often walks at a later date. The child who is an active early walker is often slower in learning to talk. Children vary as to which they learn first, and will probably need to expend their energy in one direction or the other.

Language skill, is an individual matter, and wide variations can be expected among normal children. But, by age three or four, speech should be understandable even to those outside of the family. The general average is a vocabulary of: three words at twelve months, 20 to 25 words at eighteen months, 275-300 words at two years, and 900 to 1000 words at three years. Extent of vocabulary reflects the child's intellectual development and social experiences. Rich verbal contact with older children and parents is especially important.

In general, children tend to use the following sounds in words at the indicated ages. At three and a half years of age you might expect the child to say the b as in boy, the p as in pony, the m as in mommy, the w as in want, the h as in hop.

Other sounds develop at certain ages in the same way.

| | |
|---|---|
| 4 1/2 years | d,t,n,g,k,ng,y |
| 5 1/2 years | f |
| 6 1/2 years | s,z,r,th,wh |

Nouns are "single word" sentences until the child is two years of age; such as "doggie", "cookie", and "drink". Around two, the child uses two and three word combinations to express action such as "Doggie bark", "Daddy go", and "Jimmy fall down". He calls himself by his given name. He is preoccupied with himself, and his speech is sprinkled with "I", "me", and "Mine". Connectives like "with", "under", "because" are last to be acquired. This comes in the third year or later.

Words become instruments for expressing feelings and ideas. The child acts out his words. He also repeats over and over again as he gains control of his tongue, mouth, and throat muscles, acquiring more exact sounds. Some of the toddler's words may be hard to understand at this age, and this is normal. Training measures also have little effect at this age. Correction occurs gradually if the parents and others speak to him in clear, short sentences, and don't encourage him in baby talk.

## Vegetables and Fruits

The sources of foods in this group that provide a good source of vitamin C are:

Orange or orange juice, grapefruit or grapefruit juice, cantaloupe, tangerine, fresh strawberries, tomatoes or tomato juice, broccoli, brussels sprouts, raw cabbage, fresh spinach.

Good sources of Vitamin A are:

Dark green and yellow vegetables - broccoli, carrots, pumpkin, winter squash, sweet potatoes, spinach, turnip greens and otner dark green leaves. Apricots and cantaloupe are also sources of Vitamin A.

## Milk and Milk Products

The sources of foods in this group include:

Milk in its various forms.
Cheese varieties.
Ice Cream

These foods provide nutrients in the form of:

Calcium and phosphorus for building of strong bones and teeth
Protein for growth.
Vitamin D (if fortified) for absorption of calcium.
Vitamin A

## Other Foods that Children Eat

Butter, margarine, salad dressings, oils, lard and shortenings used on foods provide energy and variety in meal.

Desserts of puddings and custards made with milk and eggs, fruit, gingerbread, and cookies made with molasses, oatmeal, or raisins provide vitamins, minerals, and energy.

Eat the 4 basic foods everyday

## THE PATHWAY TO GOOD NUTRITION

### The Basic Four Food Groups

### Sources of Foods and Nutrients

There are a variety of foods contained in each of the four basic food groups that aid the bodies of children and adults alike. At least one food from each group should be included at every meal.

### Meat and Meat Substitutes

The sources of foods in this group include:

Beef; veal; lamb; pork; variety meats such as liver, kidney and heart
Poultry and eggs
Fish and shellfish
Peanut butter and cheese

These foods provide nutrients in the form of:

Protein for growth, tissue repair, building of blood and muscles.
B vitamins
Iron

### Bread and Cereals

(restored, enriched or whole grain)

The sources of foods in this group include:

Breads; cooked cereals; ready-to-eat cereals; cornmeal; crackers; flour; grits; macroni; spaghetti; noodles; rice; rolled oats; baked goods if made with whole grain or enriched flour.

These foods provide nutrients in the form of:

B vitamins for normal digestion, appetite and happy spirits.
Iron to help make hemoglobin in the red blood cells.
Protein for growth.
Energy for daily activity
Roughage for regularity

## Rhythm

Children enjoy moving; they enjoy rhythm and they enjoy combining these two. Children should be given the type of music that encourages them to act it out because their participation will help the music become a real part of them. Each child will act out a song differently which is perfectly normal and to be encouraged.

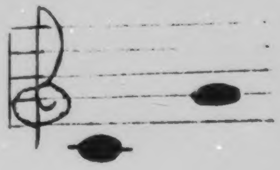
Another part of rhythm development is playing along with the music on a rhythm instrument such as a drum, bells, rhythm sticks, etc. Certainly a child should not be encouraged to formal lessons before school age, but he will enjoy keeping time and possibly marching with the music. Again it should be noted that at first the child's motions and rhythm playing may not exactly follow the music. That will come in time. Enjoyment should be the important thing at this time.

## Singing Development

A young child can --

a. Sing in the general direction of the melody, but not match tones.

b. Sing in a limited range from about middle C to G.



c. Learn by repetition.

Therefore --

a. Children's Songs and lullabies should have --

   1. repeated word patterns
   2. repeated melodic patterns
   3. proper vocal range

b. Children need lots of chances to match tones within their vocal range. (singing along with good records, piano, etc. will satisfy this need)

c. Songs with too wide a vocal range will frustrate the child.

It's important when singing with preschoolers that singing be for their enjoyment. Remember that being able to sing on pitch and with the proper tones takes time to develop and the average preschooler is not capable of it. He needs many repetitive experiences to gradually develop tone.

Idea to Try -- You might try a simple game that will give a child a feeling for pitch. Sing his name followed by "Where are you", all on the same pitch. Encourage him to answer "Here I am" on the same pitch. Then change the pitch and sing again waiting for him to answer on that pitch.

# FOSTERING CREATIVITY

## Music

Many parents indicate an interest in developing musical talent in their children as evidenced by the large amount of money spent on music lessons often forced on the child. Frequently such a child doesn't stick with the lessons long enough to get the real benefits because musicianship is more than lessons and practice.

Development of musical awareness, which may later be guided into musicianship, should begin very early in the child's life because it is accomplished only over a long period of time. There are several areas in which a parent can begin to help a child learn music formally.

### Listening

Children are fascinated by music and sounds. A listening program can be started very early to begin to develop this natural sensitivity to sounds. Since the child is born with no preference for any particular kind of music a variety of kinds of music should be introduced through media such as records, tapes, or piano, etc. Overstuffing him with a particular kind of music may turn him against it forever. Play good music but don't necessarily call attention to it. Keep in mind that the child likes and also learns from repetition so it is not necessary to have an infinite number of different records. More appropriate would be a few really good short records or tapes of different kinds of music. In addition, since children have very short attention spans, too much music at one time can lead to a negative attitude.

As the child gets a little older it is possible to have an actual listening time in which the parent and child talk about the highness, lowness, softness, loudness, etc. of the music. Good awareness of musical tones and ability to really listen are crucial to a child's musical abilities such as singing.

## DRAMATIC PLAY

Dramatic play is important for the pre-schooler. It boosts creativity and encourages language and social interaction. There are things you can do to stimulate your child and provide for a variety of types of dramatization. Some toys can be wonderful aids for helping the child's play.

If a child is shy and needs experience in talking, a microphone may encourage him. Maybe, if he won't talk to you, he'll talk into the microphone. To make a microphone, use a dowel stick and poke it into a rubber ball. Paint both the ball and the stick a gray or silver color. You can bore a hole through the other end of the stick and fasten some clothesline or heavy string through it to simulate an electric cord. Another type of microphone may be made with a tuna can, a dowel stick and a wooden block. Make sure that the can is clean and has no rough edges. Poke one end of the stick through the can and mount the other end of the stick on the block of wood.

Megaphones also encourage children to talk. Cut the end off an empty plastic gallon bleach bottle to make a good megaphone--complete with handle.

Puppets appeal to young children. They require a child's creativity and imagination. Many different kinds of puppets are fun. Children can be quite creative in making puppets and using them to act out stories. Through the puppets, they reveal a great deal about themselves and the

concepts or ideas that they have. Very young children may talk both to and for the puppet--or--they may not want to talk at all. Their use of puppets may be spontaneous, unstructured and very brief--a means of expressing feelings rather than giving information. Some children may need lots of encouragement and support before they are able to express their thoughts to others. They should not be put under pressure to perform.

Some easy types of puppets are made from socks or mittens. Collect old, clean socks or mittens. Let your child draw or paint a face on the material. Pull the sock or mitten over his hand. Paper bag puppets are also fun. Use small paper bags, ones that will fit over your child's hand. Let him draw, paint, or paste features made from yarn, construction paper or buttons on the bag. Finger holes can be made for the arms of the puppet and you can make the face so that the fold comes at the mouth.

To interest your child in puppetry, begin by making and using a simple puppet to share a story with the children. Then, encourage the child to either tell you the story again--through the puppet--or to tell the story to a friend using it.

Other good props for dramatic play are dress up clothes. Hats are wonderful. For some children, they can be the only prop needed to become a whole character. Purses, shoes, boots, vests, and maternity tops are good also. For safety's sake, very long dresses or men's trousers should be avoided. Children love to dress up. If they have a special box to which things are added from time to time, there will always be possibilities for them.

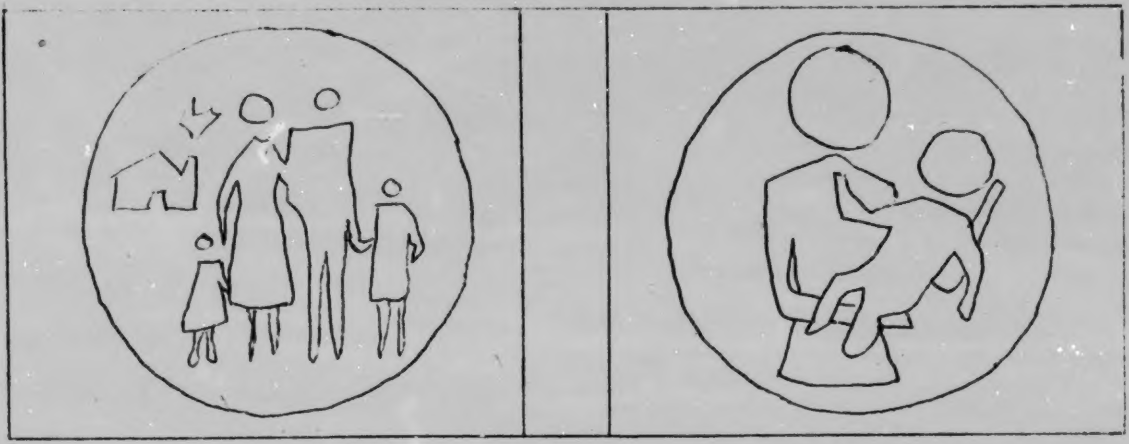
You might also include pots and pans. These can be your discards or garage sale purchases.

Cardboard boxes also encourage imaginative dramatic play. Cardboard stoves can be made by painting burners on the top of a box and cutting out a flap for the oven door. Reinforce the oven door's hinge with masking tape. Boxes can be stacked together to use as doll houses. Or paint wheels on the sides and they become cars and trains in which children can ride. Boxes can be used for tables or for a place to hide. Large refrigerator boxes make nice houses. Cut out a door and windows. Let the children decorate the outside with water colors, tempera paints, crayons, or washable felt-tip markers. Empty dry food boxes are fun to use to play grocery store. Two advantages of box toys are their cost and the fact that they can be discarded when they are shabby.

Other props might include old pieces of garden hose to use for playing fireman or gasoline station. A garden hose in the wagon will equip a fireman, especially, if he has a hat and boots. Deep sea diving masks made from plastic coffee can lids can turn a child into an authentic underwater adventurer. Poke two holes--one on each side of the circle. Insert a strip of elastic into one hole, knot it on the outside of the lid, then, put the elastic through the other hole and knot its end. Your child can then slip the mask over his face and become an explorer of the depths. A stick with a rope tied to it will be all that a pretend fisherman needs. A board placed across a wagon will make wings for an airplane. If several children each have wagons, the group can have a good train. A large belt or rope attached to your child's waist and to a tree or pole will make your child feel he's swinging aloft on a telephone pole. Several tools stuck in his belt enable him to repair damages. Lengths of rope ~~will be~~ the new wires. A broom upside down makes an easy horse for a cowboy to ride. For your child to be a painter, mix starch and water for a white paint your child can use to paint an outdoor fence. The rain will wash it off. You can think of other items around your home that can serve to encourage your child's dramatic play.

With no props at all, small children can act out familiar nursery rhymes. Three year olds especially, enjoy this. One person can say the nursery rhyme while someone else acts it out. As easy one to do is "Jack-Be-Nimble." Acting out stories provides great possibilities, as many children can participate. Remember, do not suggest that any child memorize the lines--that kills the fun. Children do an amazing job of ad-libbing. A good story to act out is "The Three Little Pigs."

A young child finds much joy in song and story. Nursery rhymes and lullabies have been part of his life. As he grows, he craves stories of the life he is getting to know and even those with which he is unfamiliar. The more experiences a child has, the more background he has for pretending. A child loves to pretend he is someone else. A make-believe word can be exciting to a young child, especially, if you enter into it with him. This is dramatization at its best--free and spontaneous.



## HELPING CHILDREN WHEN THERE IS A CRISIS IN THE FAMILY

Death, divorce, separation of parents or children separated from parents:

- * Teach a child through your own attitudes and behavior. When parents take a reasonable attitude toward success and failure, it is likely their children will follow their example.
- * When family members disagree, explain that parents have a common aim but differ in the best way of achieving a secure future. Help them recognize differences of opinion.
- * Family functioning and climate are more important than the number of parents in the home.
- * Place emphasis on family quality and harmony.
- * Help a child understand that it is important and o.k. to express his feelings freely.
- * Help a child make an effort to adjust to things.
- * Help a child accept the sorrow or disappointment instead of trying to escape from it.
- * Help a child accept the emotional support of others.
- * In the case of death, help a child accept the fact that no amount of wishful thinking can bring the loved one back; help a child talk about his loss.
- * Help the child in his relationships (and questioning) by other children, at school. etc.

* Help the child recognize the difference between temporary and/or permanent absence of a parent or loved one; temporary or continuing.

* Do not expose children to overly intense adult emotions (they may observe a parent's grief and share it yet be shielded from the most intense moments of feeling among adults.)

* Remaining parent should use discretion in giving reasons for the absence of the other parent. The amount of information given will depend on the age and emotional maturity of the child. Socially sanctioned absences include military service, business or professional obligations and death; socially disapproved, include death due to a dishonored activity or suicide, divorce, separation, desertion, nonmarriage, institutionalization, and imprisonment.

Illness, disease, mental disorder, etc..........

* Be determined that family life be built around that which is normal rather than abnormal.

* An accident or a chronic illness may make a child more demanding and/or his mother more protective. Some children exercise the new power they have acquired because of their illnesses.

Preparing children for emergencies.............

* Explain what you are doing and why (personal responsibility in relation to danger).

* Protect and reassure.

* Limit explanations--gauge information to child's understanding.

* Clear up misunderstandings.

* Support a basic sense of reason and dignity in human affairs.

* Encourage open conversation.

* Let children know about attitudes and values that support friendly regulations among nations.

# NOISE - UNWANTED SOUND

## Is It Affecting You and Your Children?

Sound, so vital to part of our existence, is growing to such a degree in our environment that today it is a very real threat to the health of both children and adults. Noise in our home is beginning to reach harmful levels with all our tools and appliances. The noise level we experience daily has increased so gradually we fail to recognize its danger. It can result in a hearing loss that can be a handicap, but what is worse, a hearing loss that cannot be restored. Noise in the home can be a source of stress, annoyance and fatigue which can affect a person's mental and physical health. Some research indicates that existing noise levels may even adversely affect the unborn child. Children today are being effected by sound levels from firecrackers, toy guns, and all sorts of toys equipped with noisemaking devices. Many toys pose potential hazard to hearing and adults should consider this when selecting toys.

When children are exposed to high intensity sounds in their recreation and play environment, hearing loss cannot only be common but is increasing at an alarming rate. The noise today has risen so much that more than one-half of our population (more than 100 million people) may experience a gradual and partial deafness.

Be sure to include a hearing examination in you and your child's regular medical check-up.

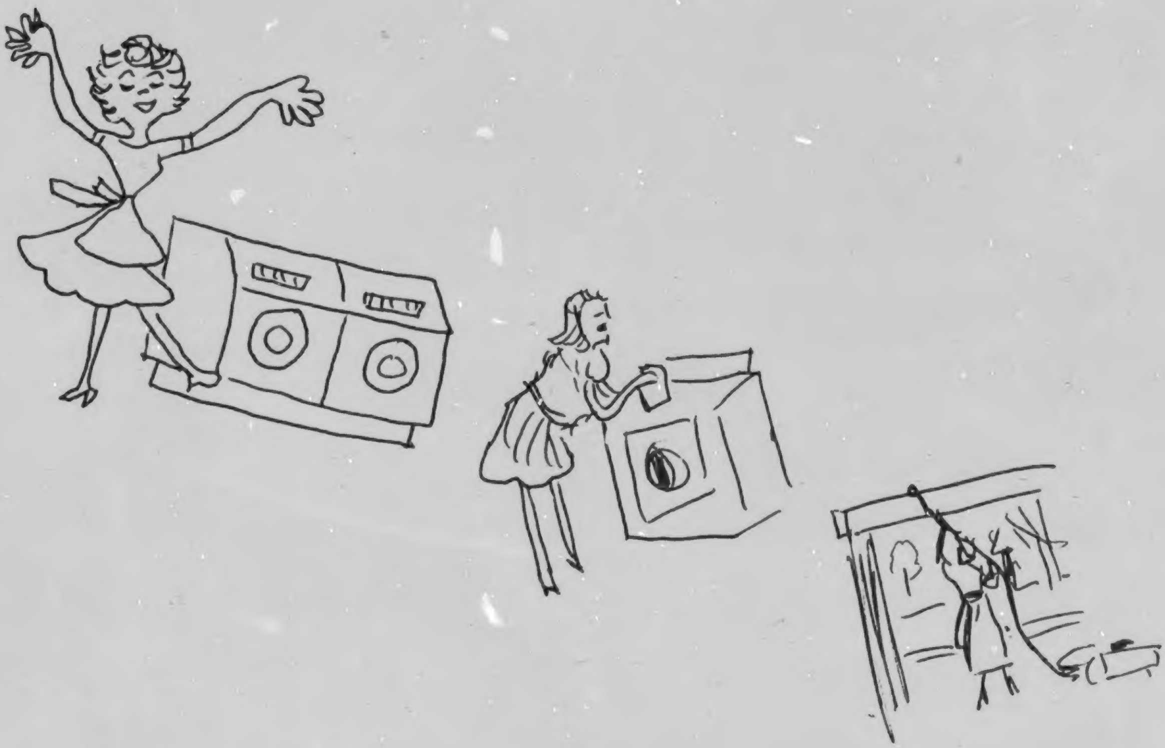
Did you or your children ever try to watch television while the air conditioner, dish washer, garbage disposal, washer, dryer and blender-mixer are in action. All these sounds are equal to the noise level outside of a major jet airport. The following are a few suggestions

1) try to have family meals in a quiet area rather than in the kitchen
2) use one appliance at a time; you might try placing a cork or rubber pad under heavy appliances if vibration noise a problem
3) Compare noise levels of several different models before buying a new appliance
4) Keep sound level as low as is enjoyable when listening to radio, television or hi-fi

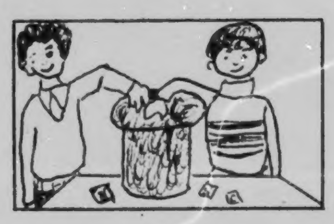
5) Carpeting, especially with a pad underneath, heavy draperies and upholstered furniture all help to absorb sound

Excessive noise may also lead to hyperkenetic children (one who is impulsive, easily distracted, restless, energetic, or over-active). About one in every four boys is hyperkenetic. They may flounder at home and later at school because of excessive activity and short attention span. Noise is the most common distraction for them whih leads a hyperkenetic child to destructive behavior which produces more noise. This may further increase the mother's tension and frustration.

There are a growing number of women who feel overwhelmed, complain of headaches, gastro-intestional symptoms and nervous tensions (tired mother syndrome). Many experts feel this insiduous build of clatter in the home is affecting the foundation of family life and may be responsible for a breakdown of communication between family members.



# ALPHABET HAT



YOU NEED:

AN OLD HAT, BOX OR PAPER BAG
CONSTRUCTION PAPER
SCISSORS
PENCIL OR CRAYONS

YOU DO:

1. CUT 10 OR 12 SQUARES FROM CONSTRUCTION PAPER AND MARK EACH WITH AN ALPHABET LETTER.

   U K B S

2. PUT ALL THE SQUARES INTO A HAT OR BAG.
3. PULL OUT ONE SQUARE AT A TIME. NAME IT AND THEN FIND AN OBJECT IN THE ROOM WHICH BEGINS WITH THAT LETTER.
4. POINT TO THE OBJECT, THEN GIVE ITS NAME. YOU MIGHT SAY, "T IS FOR TABLE" . . . . "B IS FOR BREAD". . . "W IS FOR WINDOW" OR "P IS FOR PICTURE."

FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

ADD LETTERS THAT ARE HARDER TO FIND: V, F, G, H, I, K, ETC. WHICH ONES ARE VOWELS? ARE THEY HARDER TO FIND THAN CONSONANTS?

WITH TWO OR MORE PLAYERS:

TAKE TURNS DRAWING LETTERS FROM THE HAT AND MAKE A GAME OF IT!

## RECIPES FOR FUN

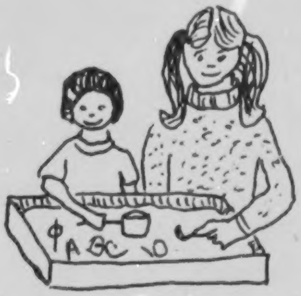
For pre-schoolers, Parents As Resource's learning game Alphabet Hat is the beginning of learning the alphabet.

For early readers, it's a game to continue letter familarization, and for older children, it becomes a spelling game. It may take mother with the help of older children a little time to cut out all the letters, but once the game is made, it can be played frequently.

More PAR handicrafts and learning games are available in the books "Recipes for Fun," each $2, and available by writing PAR Project, Box 273-T, Glencoe, Ill. 60022.

LEARN
AND
PLAY

## SALT BOX



YOU NEED:

A LARGE, SHALLOW BOX WITH LID
2-3 BOXES OF SALT
COLORED TOOTHPICKS
FUNNEL, SALT SHAKER
MEASURING CUPS AND SPOONS

YOU DO:

POUR THE SALT INTO THE BOX, COVERING THE BOTTOM ABOUT 1/2" DEEP. THEN TRY SOME OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

a PRACTICE "WRITING" THE ALPHABET LETTERS
8 AND NUMBERS IN THE SALT. SHAKE BOX TO
K "ERASE."

/ MAKE TOOTHPICK CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE SALT,
/ STACKING AND CROSSING THEM TO BUILD
INTERESTING FIGURES AND SHAPES.

MEASURE THE SALT WITH THE SPOONS AND CUPS AND PRACTICE POURING IT BACK INTO THE BOX.

MAKE A TOOTHPICK RING TOSS GAME, USING SMALL CARDBOARD CIRCLES.

# RECIPES FOR FUN

This is the third in a 14-part series of learning activities designed by PAR, a team of three teachers and a social worker.

These "recipes" will help parents to guide their children in learning through play. The games and crafts featured in the series require only "saved" materials found in the home.

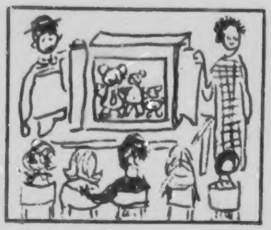
SALTBOX: A home-made salt box makes beach or sandbox activities possible indoors as well as out. It also can provide dozens of opportunities for developing reading and math skills.

As a child feels the indentations in the salt (from the numbers and letters he has written), he will get a tactile sense of the alphabet and number system.

Pouring and measuring the salt into various sized containers can help the child understand quantities and relationships. Straws, toothpicks, popsicle sticks or even tiny toys can transform the saltbox into many imaginary worlds.

For more learning ideas adapatable to the classroom and day care center, as well as the home, send for PAR's illustrated activity books, "Recipes for Fun" and "More Recipes for Fun," at $2 each to: PAR Project, Box 273-T, Glencoe, Ill. 60022.

# YOUR OWN T.V. SHOW

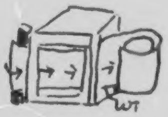


YOU NEED:

A LONG ROLL OF PAPER
(OR SEVERAL PIECES TAPED
TOGETHER)
CRAYONS OR MARKERS
CARDBOARD TUBE FROM
PAPER TOWELING
GLUE OR TAPE
A MEDIUM-SIZED CARDBOARD
CARTON

YOU DO:

1. FIRST MAKE UP A STORY...OR CHOOSE A FAMILIAR FOLD OR FAIRY TALE.
2. DRAW OR PASTE PICTURES THAT TELL YOUR STORY ONTO A ROLL OF PAPER OR CLOTH; THE ROLL BECOMES YOUR FILM.
3. GLUE OR TAPE THE END OF THE FILM TO THE CARDBOARD TUBE AND THEN WIND THE FILM AROUND THE TUBE.
4. FOR A MOVIE "SCREEN", CUT A LARGE RECTANGLE FROM THE BOTTOM OF AN OPEN BOX. MAKE A LONG SLIT ON EACH SIDE OF THE BOX TO HOLD THE FILM.



5. SLOWLY UNROLL YOUR PICTURES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT FOR EVERYONE TO SEE. YOU MIGHT "NARRATE" AS YOU GO ALONG.

"VARIATION": OLDER CHILDREN COULD WRITE CAPTIONS OR DIALOGUE UNDER EACH PICTURE.

# RECIPES FOR FUN

The quickest way to cure post-Christmas letdowns in children is to put them to work on a project. Parents As Resource (PAR) dreamed up Make Your Own TV Show for just that purpose.

As you read the directions, you see the jobs of picking a story, drawing pictures onto a rolling piece of paper or cloth and making the television set take time and concentration. The job is creative for children, though, and they all will take pleasure in both the completed work and pretending to be television producers and performers.

More PAR handicrafts and learning games are in the books "Recipes for Fun" and "More Recipes for Fun," each $2 and available by writing PAR Project, Box 273-T, Glencoe, Ill. 60022.

Sally Cartwright

## Blocks and Learning

Blocks are an important part of the entire nursery school program and they also, in some measure, speak to the values, insights and principles of a full curriculum.

Indoor, nursery school unit blocks were designed for children by Caroline Pratt in 1914. Nearly sixty years ago, she discovered qualities in the block building and play experience which we value today. Firstly, these blocks were made in multiples of a unit (5-1/2" x 2-3/4" x 1-3/8") with increasing size in one dimension only--length. This avoids frustration for the child who does not readily handle more than one quality of change at a time.

Because blocks are firm, clean, squarely cut and solid hardwood, and their forms are repeatable and predictable in how they fit together, they are usually nonthreatening to the children. Some children, who feel uncomfortable with dripping easel paint, soft, wet clay or with finger paint, work quite happily with blocks.

Blocks are a dramatic material to work with. One can really make something which stands our in three-dimensional boldness to see and touch and reach through, and even to crash on occasion. To build, use, change, destroy and build again at will is mastery. Growing mastery gives a child joy in his work. Even a three-year-old child works a long time, striving to build what satisfies him. His very persistence and involvement with blocks help make this material a valuable learning experience.

Blocks present a hundred puzzling questions to the child but do not dictate answers. The child's resourcefulness and imagination are endlessly challenged but never rigidly channeled. Building among the children is varied and free with no preset standards. These are important qualities of the learning environment.

The quality of the blocks themselves does not alone define the nature of the children's experience with them, but the room arrangement, the accessories and the atmosphere all influence block building and play. Blocks may be put on low, open shelves, ordered by size and made as inviting as possible to the incipient builder, or on an expanse of open floor space next to the shelves, space which is not traveled through for other purposes. Wooden ladders, wooden trucks made to fit the blocks and without wheels, colored 1-inch cubes and simple wooden interlocking trains, which, when stood on end make people, are useful additions.

The teacher may nod or voice encouragement, but she almost never builds, for this is the child's construction world. The teacher maintains safety for children and structures, and because continued disarray after a collapsed building may invite confusion, the teacher stacks cluttered blocks neatly for further use. At clean-up time, the teacher helps the children return the blocks to the shelves, sorted according to size.

The atmosphere is mainly one of independent, responsible and active participation by children who work hard with sustained effort toward their own purpose. While a teacher would not allow misuse of blocks, to know when to stand clear is quite as important as to know when to intercede. Regard for a child's workmanship and his active learning supports a good learning environment.

What could the child learn with blocks? What, if any, are the physical, social, emotional and cognitive gains derived from block building and play?

## Physical Development

Handling blocks in a creative and meaningful construction, from the simplest pile of units to the complexities of cantilever and intricate balance, asks an increasing development of large and small motor coordination, and sensitive hand-eye integration.

## Social Development

Block building invites children to work together. Rather than relying on suggestions from the teacher, the discipline of construction itself asks for cooperative effort. When the children are keenly interested and intent on creating a building together, they may seek each other's help and learn to tolerate, even employ difference.

As young children mature, they begin to play out fantasy and reality themes with each other, using their block constructions. Small-group dramatic play can center on roads, a bridge, houses, an air terminal, tunnels and various fantasy constructions.

Group construction and play, related to the child's own purpose, promotes many socially oriented feelings and skills. Self-awareness, satisfaction in contributing to the group, getting along with others through purposeful interaction are some of the social gains from the use of blocks.

## Emotional Development

A child needs to feel that he is liked and wanted, that he is good at doing and making things and being with others. Block building and play give the child repeated opportunity to discover that he can do and make things, and that he is valued by others. The construction process can afford deep satisfaction to the child.

## Cognitive Development

Block building involves many concrete operations such as one-to-one correspondence, counting with purpose, matching, sorting, fitting blocks to spaces and using fractional parts of a whole in meaningful relationships. The unique one-dimensional multiple quality of blocks seems to encourage productive thinking and experimentation. A child may dismantle and rebuild until he is satisfied. He tries new ways, tests his results and often as not talks it all over with his friends or with himself. His verbal representation of his work and play with blocks develops language practice and proficiency.

Block building is almost continuous problem solving. Some of the solutions are delightful. When a child could not find a combination of blocks to complete his swimming pool wall, he decided emphatically to his partner,

"This is where the people will come in."

"But the water will run out!

Somewhat later they opened the classroom window a crack and returned to their pool.

"We don't need water. It's too cold to swim."

Children are using blocks and toys as concrete symbols to represent their real and fantasy life. They are using information they have perceived in their immediate world and often on TV. Sometimes they use the information in new combinations or they include facts which another child contributes to the play. Thus, in their own way they are developing relationships between facts, and they are reworking their experiences to fit new information. This cognitive process is an indispensable part of learning. Each child selects and uses blocks and the nonspecific toys we call accessories according to his own pace and style. He selects and uses them as concrete symbols to represent his own organization and redefinition of the world about him. Very gradually blocks take him one step away from the self-involvement of life-size dramatic play. Later, when he is much older, the child will handle abstract symbols, ideas, written words and generalizations. Meanwhile, block building and play invite his concrete symbolization under the creation and control of his own hands, and seem to encourage simple verbal symbolization as well. Thus, blocks can foster the very essence of cognitive development.

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Sally Cartwright, M.S., is a teacher of three-year-olds and Educational Director of the Watertown Cooperative Nursery School in the Boston area.

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Margaret G. Weiser

# PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE TEACHING OF READING

Most, if not all, of the professional knowledge and opinion about the teaching of reading is found in the journals and books devoted to the teaching of reading. This sounds logical, even so obvious that it seems redundant. However, there are serious implications of this statement for the teachers of young children, because they infrequently come in contact with the professional reading materials, and for the parents of young children, virtually none of whom come in contact with such materials. Parents do have access to articles in the popular press, which range from teaching baby to read at ten months to lists of suggested books for reading aloud or for independent reading. As valuable as some of the later kinds of articles are, there are noticeable gaps in needed information.

Most teachers and some parents do read aloud to their children each day; some teachers and some parents invest in one or more of the commercially available reading readiness materials; some teachers and some parents even introduce formal reading instruction before the children start to "real" school. But many teachers of young children, and many parents of young children, either consciously or subconsciously consider the teaching of reading out of their domain, belonging to the elementary school, whose purpose is to provide formal training or learning experience designed to teach reading, among other things. But even the elementary school teachers have incomplete answers, because the debates over early vs. later reading, and over materials and approaches continue. The number of nonreaders and poor readers in our country is so great that federal funds have been allocated to the search for more conclusive answers.

We are finally becoming convinced that children learn long before they go to school; in fact, learning may be said to begin the moment a child is born. Therefore, the usual child has four or five years of learning before he enters public school, and even when he does, he is still involved with his home for 16 to 20 hours each school day, in addition to weekends and vacations. Simple mathematics shows that a teacher working with a class of 30 children can spend an average of three minutes per child during the daily reading period.

These are some of the reasons why the goals of the school's reading program cannot be achieved without direct involvement of the home. Many parents seem to sense this intuitively, but some do not know specifically what it is that best prepares a child for success in reading. This is where the informed teacher in the day care center, the nursery school, the kindergarten and the primary grades can effectively serve the educational needs of her children, and the needs of the parents who are seeking guidance. It is the teacher's responsibility to inform the parents that they do have an influence on whether children learn to read.

The informed teacher understands the reading process, and recognizes that learning to read is a gradual process that starts long before a child enters first grade and begins to read and continues through elementary school, high school, college and the adult years. The informed teacher knows that the child acquires greater reading skill by building on simpler skills and habits. This is why it is necessary to look at the whole reading process, not just any one stage of the process. For example, in order to understand the problems of the high school reader, we look back to earlier stages for clues to his present problems.

## The Importance of Comprehension

Parents and teachers should recognize that the purpose for reading is comprehension, not word calling. Until a meaningful communication is taking place between the author and the reader, there is no comprehension, and therefore no reading, by any acceptable definition of the term. Factors influencing comprehension include: decoding skills (word recognition is necessary for comprehension); intelligence; experience (the more you bring to a book, the more you will take from it); and language.

Parents are essential in the development of experience and of language. Language is the basis of reading. By the time most children come to nursery school or kindergarten, they have mastered many essentials of sentence structure, and have a sizeable supply of words to manipulate. This facility develops through listening and responding and being responded to in his home and his neighborhood, from the very beginning of his life.

Most children, but not all children, have this language facility. There are still nonverbal homes, ones in which children are encouraged not to speak, homes where communication is limited to direct commands and admonitions to keep quiet. This is a large factor in the limited language development in the children from less advantaged homes. Some parents still follow a tradition in child rearing of keeping children quiet and keeping them from bothering anyone. This approach to child rearing is not limited to any race or any economic circumstance. Consider the crib where the father and mother do not make noises over the baby or where a baby sitter or nurse cannot be bothered with more than feeding and changing him; consider the crib with white sheets in a room with bare walls. This environment is just as stifling as the one where adults keep telling the baby to be quiet.

## The Beginning of Learning to Read

Actually, the crib is the baby's first learning environment in which he can start such beginning-to-read skills as visual and auditory discrimination. Mobiles, a toy or two, a decorative bumper, are all visually stimulating, and even more so when someone talks about them, manipulates them and directs a baby's attention to them. Daddy's voice is different from mother's, and sister and brother and grandparents and neighbors all have different sounds, too. A baby learns to discriminate by listening, by responding, by having a conversation even on the babbling and cooing level. When a baby graduates to a playpen, he should hear lots of talk: nursery rhymes and songs, as well as spontaneous conversation. He will gradually join in with the rhythms and the sounds, and thoroughly enjoy his participation.

By eight or nine months, a baby will usually enjoy nursery songs and lullabies; by 12 or 14 months he may look at pictures while nursery rhymes are read or sung; and by a year and a half, or two years, he may turn the pages himself. In fact, by the time he can turn the pages, he also will know the story line so well that the reader dare not skip a word. Parents who have read to their infants and toddlers, or who are doing so now, know that no other activity develops a warmer relationship than does sharing language by way of rhyme or song or story, a relationship which is priceless to both parent and child. This relationship can become stronger and stronger as they continue to share the printed word. Sharing the printed word is also an important key to success in reading. These kinds of activities have even been studied with reference to future reading achievement. Moore (1968) and his investigators went into the homes of two and a half-year-olds and observed the toys, books and experiences provided by the family, and the quality of parent-child relationships. These ratings were compared to the reading achievement test scores of these same children at age eight. They found a high correlation between the early observations in the home and the reading test scores five and a half years later. This study tends to suggest that the key to improved reading skills may not be in the classroom--it may be in the home. It also suggests that the process should begin early.

## Exploration and Play-Learning

The four- or five-year-old is on the doorstep to reading. He is also curious, active, self-important, uncomfortable in large groups and not a good sitter. This is not the time to plunk him down at a desk or table and chain his natural curiosity and activity. This is the time for him to be free to explore. How does the kitty feel?--where did the bunny go?--what happened to the flower seeds we planted?--how do fish breathe? Exploration and play are the child's natural ways of learning at this age. What does this have to do with reading? Everything. Think of all the wonderful ideas he is getting to talk about, and later to write about. He is getting some sense of what this world is about; he is acquiring understandings and concepts and vocabulary; he is using all his senses to drink in the mysteries around him; he is laying a foundation for future use of symbols. He has his quiet times too, times to listen to adult talk or to an adult reading aloud. Let him suggest the first book, and he will involve himself in "reading" as he enjoys his favorite. But introduce new ones, too, and these will soon become good friends. Now another facet of reading can be introduced: reading to find out about something he has seen or done. All kinds of printed material are necessary to expand his reading horizons. Adult photo-magazines (the National Geographic is a marvelous picture book), children's dictionaries and an encyclopedia for finding things out are all appropriate and of value. It is time for parents and teachers to realize that the world is bigger and more exciting than 21 inches of square glass with automatic color tuning. It is time to recognize the fact that children as well as adults need opportunity for self-generated activities, for self-expression, for participation, for direct experience. All of these are defeated by watching television.

## Reading to Children

Reading aloud to the four- and five-year-old can help develop a taste for reading. Nancy Larrick supplies an excellent example. "I shall never forget the book I gave Peter when he was four. As I read it to him I realized that I had bought hastily and unwisely on the strength of stunning pictures. The text was wretchedly dull. Peter listened with a polite show of interest to the end. Then he quietly closed the book and said, 'Let's put it in the trash basket.' And he did" (1969, pp. 26-27). This child was well on his way to becoming a critical reader, an evaluator of printed material and a thinker. How did this come about? Larrick continues:

> In that household, read-aloud time is the high point of Peter's day and a sacred hour. As bedtime approaches, Peter collects the books he wants to take upstairs. Sometimes his father or mother will bring another volume. The dinner dishes wait and so does television. Visitors can join in the story hour or shift for themselves. The read-aloud time is relaxing because everyone knows it will not be interrupted. It is stimulating because Peter's mother and father put life into their reading. It is never dull because they borrow the best books from the public library and buy the ones that Peter will enjoy. Finally the reading is successful because Peter is a participant from beginning to end. Besides choosing the books he often recites memorized lines from his old favorites. Sometimes he makes up his own words for the pictures. He helps hold the book and if he wants to turn back to a certain picture, he turns back. Because of this first-class performance by his parents, Peter is growing up with the feeling that reading and books are vital (1969, p. 27).

Needless to say, Peter will no doubt be a top achiever in reading when the time comes.

The true value of a picture book is frequently by-passed. It should stimulate conversation, discovery and thought as the same pictures are seen and the same story is told again and again. A picture book is the transition from total dependence on personal experience and spoken words to the idea that images and experiences can be provided by print. No other medium can possibly take the place of the book in the child's preparation for learning to read. A child needs to be read to regularly and often by an adult who can be questioned, who serves as an interpreter between the author and illustrator, and the child and his own knowledge and experiences.

Reading aloud to the child after he enters the primary grades is a good way to satisfy his ever-expanding curiosity, and to continue that warm "togetherness" relationship. Of course he is beginning to read himself, and of course the teacher reads to the class in school, but at home _he_ can choose the book, _he_ can stop the reading with a question, _he_ can look at a picture as long as he chooses. He is the focus of attention and each child needs a little of that each day.

Reading aloud sounds old-fashioned in our electronic world. But reading aloud to children is one of the best ways in this world for children to become good readers themselves. It is somewhat like taking a young, struggling pianist to a concert to listen to Van Cliburn. The beginner learns what a piano can and should sound like. The beginning reader, struggling with sounds and word meanings, needs to be treated to a good story so he knows what it is he is struggling for, just as the young pianist needs to hear something in addition to himself playing the scales. If a regular trip to the library has not been established, now is the time. Regular visits might persuade the child that the library is as important as the gas station or the grocery store. The library's story hour will supply another sample of good things to come in books.

Many well-meaning parents drop the story hour as soon as the child begins to ready beyond the "look, look, look" stage. According to Larrick:

> although the child in first and second grade can read simple things alone, his choices are limited. He reads in a halting fashion that makes the best story sound dull. This is one more good reason why you should continue reading aloud even though he is beginning to read independently. The swinging vigor of your reading will give him a model. And the colorful language in stories too different for him to read himself will remind him of treasures ahead. Read him some of the simple books that he will soon read himself. But be sure also to read some of the wonderful books he may not be able to read for several years (1969, p. 56).

Some parents loudly proclaim, "I haven't time to read aloud!" When and if they realize they are really investing in their child's future perhaps they can find the time. It is not enough just to surround the child with reading materials. He needs the attention of a significant adult. He needs the positive attitudes of a significant adult. When we read to a child we show in a real way that books are important and enjoyable. The story hour isn't literally an hour. It can be as brief or prolonged as is convenient. If mother isn't always available, father or grandparents or big brother or sister are admirable substitutes. Babysitters who arrive before bedtime can be instructed to read aloud instead of turning on television as before-bed routine. Above all, if the child is having trouble with reading in school, he should not be made to sit down after dinner and read to someone, and thus repeat and reinforce the unhappy state of events.

## Respect for Reading

The parents' respect for reading will show in the way they speak of books and the time they devote to their child's interest in reading. It does not help to label one member of the family a bookworm, while exalting the Little Leaguer who never reads. Learning to read can be treated as a sport. If we want a child to enjoy baseball, we take him to watch the local team practice in the ball park, we talk about rules and plays at the dinner table, we practice catch with him in the backyard. We do everything we can to help him become a good member of a baseball team. If parents were really aware of their influence, they would do the same kinds of things with reading. They might talk about word meanings, play reading games, talk about books they have read or are planning to read, read aloud to the child, encourage the child to write and read the grocery list, to follow directions in a cookbook or model kit, to fill in a crossword puzzle. They might ask their child to find something interesting in the newspaper and have him read it to them, or they read it to him.

Perhaps it is too much to claim that the family who reads together stays together, but it is not too much to claim that the family who values reading will produce children who can read well. It is primarily up to the parents whether their children become good readers, and whether they continue to read. It is primarily up to the teachers to inform the parents of their vital role in the teaching of reading.

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Carol Seefeldt

# BOXES ARE TO BUILD . . . A CURRICULUM!

Why not begin with a box? Who hasn't seen children, the world over, in the suburbs or the center of a crowded city, hauling a treasured discarded cardboard box home? Or curled up inside a box, or building a fort with boxes? And what grandmother hasn't been disappointed to see her grandbaby quickly discard the elaborate, expensive toy she so carefully selected for him, in favor of playing with the box it came in?

Boxes have always held a special fascination for young children. Adults, seeing boxes only in their utilitarian functions for containing things, carrying things in, or something to throw things away in, have forgotten the joy, spontaneous delight, mystery and excitement inherent in an empty box. Boxes, so alluring to the young child, also offer the potential for a myriad of learning experiences. Child care centers, struggling on limited budgets to provide the optimum in educational experiences, and care giving for young children, could begin building their curriculum with a free, unlimited supply of boxes.

## Infants

Babies in child care centers spend a great deal of their waking time listening and looking. Blank nursery walls, corners and ceilings are transformed into interesting mosaics of color and design through boxes. From the ceiling hang a mobile constructed of boxes of various sizes, shapes and colors. The bright boxes twirled by the breezes catch the infant's eye and provide the necessary visual stimulation. Or take some box lids, mount colorful bits of cloth, paper, flowers or plastic objects in each lid. Hang these fantastic creations on the walls for additional eye-catching areas.

As babies become able to reach out for objects and grasp them, small boxes covered with shiny, washable and chewable paper, making interesting and easily obtainable toys. Objects, too large to be swallowed should they escape, placed inside several of these boxes before they are securely, tightly and safely closed and sealed, turn a box into a rattle, a fine object to stimulate the young child's auditory senses.

Older babies will need an entire set of empty gift boxes, with lids; and if these fit into one another, all the more valuable! Once in a while put something inside the boxes for babies to find. When the baby has learned to release objects and drop them, he'll delight in tossing box after box to the floor. Tie a box to his high chair, or jump chair with a string. He can throw this box down, and pull it back when he's ready to throw it again.

Why not explore the child's sense of object permanence[1] with boxes? Hide a box under a blanket. Does the baby look for it? Or put some other toy he is playing with inside a box. Can he find it?

## Toddlers

These energetic, mobile children, who can now creep, crawl, walk, run and climb into, onto and around things, need imaginative playthings that will foster their sense of confidence by giving them something "to do" safely. Toddlers--avid, dexterious and quick explorers--find boxes challenging and most appropriate to their increasing sense of insatiable curiosity.

When an adult joins the toddler in play, doing something for a few minutes with the box in the presence of the child, the child perceives new possibilities for the box. An adult can demonstrate the usefulness of a discarded tissue box with a hole in the top, or a shoe box with lid taped on and a hole cut in one side, by dropping empty spools, reels or small blocks through the holes. Or the adult can show the toddler how to line up a series of clothes pins around the side of a box; a task, once the toddler catches on, that will entrance him for hours. The intricacies of various catches and closings on boxes may also need demonstration by an older, more experienced person.

Every toddler needs a good supply of very small boxes to store and secrete his treasures in, giving him a sense of privacy. Bright gift boxes, some with tissue paper still inside, will fascinate toddlers; while an old box, filled with junk mail, provides the ultimate in excitement.

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[1] According to Piaget, the ability of the child to know something does not cease to exist just because it is out of sight is one of the stages in intellectual development.

Large muscle activity is stimulated through oatmeal boxes or ice cream cartons that can be rolled, pushed, pulled and stacked. Tie some of these to the end of a string and they are equally valuable to pull behind as they walk. A series of shoe boxes strung together on a rope make an extremely satisfactory train for the young child. Empty pint or quart milk cartons, washed and stuffed solidly with newspapers, are throwable, buildable blocks. They also can be stacked, counted, lined up in a row, or turning into stepping stones.

Remove the ends from a large cardboard carton and you have a tunnel. Turn a large carton on one side and it is a house, or put the opening to the top and it is a train or truck, just right for the toddler. He can get into it, under it, or onto it. He can be by himself, or joined by some of his friends. He can push and pull these boxes and even, if he wants, build with them.

Enhanced and fostered through his play with boxes, the toddler's concept formation grows and flourishes. An adult, offering verbal labels and stimulation, providing the child with various boxes to meet his growing maturity level, and occasionally guiding his play, does much to facilitate the growth of concepts. Some boxes are empty, others full, some are light, others heavy. Can the toddler begin to count his boxes with you? Does he feel the different textures, the shiny smooth metal of the band aid box, the bumpy plastic of the tool box or the prickly roughness of the fiberboard box? What colors are the boxes? What sizes? Can the child find the largest? The smallest? And finally, what shapes are the boxes . . . are they round, or square or rectangular?

## Preschoolers

Possibilities with boxes increase as the child grows and matures. The preschoolers, beginning cooperative play, can use boxes as the basis of group efforts in creative thinking and cognitive growth. Verbal skills are heightened as children form social groups, animatedly discussing various possibilities for their box. Small and large muscle activity, still important for the preschool child, is fostered through play with boxes.

Large packing boxes, piano boxes, washing machine boxes are converted into trucks, trains or planes. A group of preschoolers can move these around, arranging them in groups, sometimes joining them together with a few boards, or using hammer and nails. They will delight in painting their creations over and over again to fit their current mood. If you are lucky enough to find a large wooden crate, the children can turn it into a rocket ship, complete with instrument panel, or a pirate ship, a house, fort or church. Everyone can fit inside, or just a few.

When children play with old wooden cantalope, orange, apple or milk crates, they can learn to work together in cooperative play. These crates, worth hunting for, are used by children in ways similar to blocks. However, their weight requires the help of several children before they can be lifted, hauled and stacked into buildings. With the addition of some boards that fit into the slots of these boxes, complex buildings result.

Be sure to have a large supply of small boxes on hand, for the preschool child finds these most functional. Each preschooler will need to have his own cigar box, or shoe box to keep his treasures in; and ice cream cartons, decorated and delineated with each child's name, serve as satisfactory substitutes for expensive wooden cubbies. Jewelry boxes, earring boxes, fishing or hardward boxes, each with separate compartments, delight the preschool child, and serve to foster his classification skills.

To encourage classification, plastic boxes or old oleo tins, can be mounted on firm boards, and used for sorting trays. A box of buttons, one of surviving single earrings, another of nuts and bolts, give the children things to classify and sort in their trays. Discriminations can be made according to size, texture, shape and color, or in any series of combinations of sizes, shapes, colors and textures. Sometimes children will sort things by themselves, at other times the adult may ask the child questions, assisting him in clarifying his classification scheme, or leading him to even more complex sorting skills.

Other boxes can be used to contain objects for sorting according to their use or the things that go together. A box of farm animals can be sorted according to families, another box, containing different types of plastic animals, can be sorted according to the classifications of zoo, farm or domestic animals.

Manipulative games, and games designed to increase the preschoolers' academic skills, can be conveniently made from, or stored in, boxes. Tissue boxes, or shoe boxes, are good containers for children's fishing games. Symbols, numerals or letters are written on fish cutouts, each with a paper-clip nose, and a magnet on a string picks out 'fish' as the children try to catch a pair. Liquor boxes, with heavy corrugated separators inside, are nice storage boxes for all types of games. One teacher put an object into each section that rhymed with an object in another section of the box. The children pulled out one object, and then tried to find the rhyming match.

Give the children hundreds of factory reject containers to construct with, and watch their creativity and imagination thrive. Empty toothpaste boxes, cracker boxes or cleanser cans are often available through commercial companies or factories for the asking and hauling. When combined with a hole punch, an abundant supply of masking tape, some string, flexible wiring and glue, they can be turned into indescribable, wonderfully wild, creations. Soap added to tempera paint, or real enamel paint, make these structures even more real.

Party or holiday time? Costumes for special occasions, hats for any occasion, can be constructed out of boxes. Boxes can also be taken apart, and put together again in different ways, or a large box can be opened and spread on the floor for everyone to paint on.

Ever-changing centers of interest are possible with boxes. The "store" can be constructed from some sturdy boxes and a board for the counter. The "post office" and "beauty shop" are blocked off from the other areas by a few boxes, giving the suggestion of a wall. Or simply hang a sign on a box, saying "ticket counter" and the children are ready to act out their trip to the airport. Boxes, with a little imagination and a few props, become the stove, sink, refrigerator and table for the housekeeping corner.

## The Curriculum is a Box

What other piece of equipment can offer the young child as many possibilities for curriculum development and learning as a box? With an adult to offer guidance, verbal stimulation and a few ideas, the box becomes the substance for the child to carry out operations on, in, with or through. It becomes the impetus for his imagination and creativity, and the thing to help develop conceptualization. The box becomes the object to:

* classify

With boxes, the young child, from the infant to the preschooler, has the opportunity to practice discrimination and classification skills. Boxes can be classified according to shape, size, texture, color, or they can be used to hold other objects to sort and classify, or for the container to classify and sort in.

* practice seriation skills with

Seriation skills grow as the baby nests the smaller box inside the larger one, or as the toddler lines his boxes up in a row, the largest first, down to the smallest, or as the preschooler stacks them, the largest at the bottom and the smallest at the top.

* count

Number skills are involved as the children count their boxes, or the things in their box. Children can count the number of beans they have in their box, or the number of buttons in the button box.

* understand space through

Space relationships are experienced through boxes. With a box the child can feel himself up high, on top of, under, or inside of. He can experience the sensation of weight and fullness, of pushing and pulling something in space.

* exercise large and small muscles with

The infant reaching, getting and shaking a box has used his muscles, coordinated his eyes and hands. The toddler, carefully opening and closing a box uses his small muscles, and the preschooler--rolling, building, hauling, jumping from--is using his entire body, large and small muscles combined, as he plays with boxes.

* create with

Creativity and imagination are constantly used with boxes. The very nature of a box demands the child's imaginative thinking. A box is only a box, until you decide what it should be, how you will change it, what you will build with it, and what you will do with it.

* cooperate with

Large boxes invite group play and cooperation. A number of children must work together in moving a large crate, taking over a group of boxes to build a space station. House play, with a couple of wooden crates as furnitures, involves abundant verbal and social give and take.

What equipment should a child care center invest in? What equipment will provide the optimum in practicability, the maximum in curriculum possibilities, and the minimum in cost? Why not spend the time, instead of money, finding boxes--tiny boxes, round boxes, tin boxes, plastic boxes, wooden and cardboard boxes--any kind of box. Stores, business, appliance dealers, warehouses, factories, army bases, schools, liquor stores--all will, for the polite asking, allow you to have their empty boxes. And when those boxes become torn, or fall apart from use, or become wet with snow and rain--throw them out, take them to the recycling center, and then get some more! A neverending supply of boxes means creative, social and educational experiences for young children. Begin with a box! Boxes are to build a curriculum!

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Dixie Ruth Crase, Nancy S. Jones

# CHILDREN LEARN FROM RECYCLING

The current emphasis on the thoughtful use of natural and/or material resources may be a particularly meaningful adventure for young children. They can easily identify with the merits of recycling. As natural scavengers and collectors, children delight in seeing discarded resources converted into useful or creative items. Bronfenbrenner (1971) deplores the "inutility" of American children; their lack of anything really important to do. In contrast, Sidel (1972) notes one of the most striking aspects of the teaching of preschool children in China is that the values and ideals of a larger society are handed down to children. Including a recycling unit in the curriculum may offer an unusual opportunity for children and significant adults to cooperate in a common cause; to accomplish something really important.

Practicing the art of recycling is nothing new for teachers of young children. Creative teachers have always sought different purposes for used or discarded materials. They know that the establishment of good relationships with community workers and businesses can insure an abundant source of supplies. The rummage, to salvage or to put one's name on a waiting list may result in a book of discontinued wallpaper patterns, an old steering wheel, paper, tile or wood scraps.

Children in these classrooms are likely to "catch" some of this spirit of collecting, saving and recycling materials. In some instances, a direct attempt to communicate the value of such efforts may prove beneficial. Organizing such a unit of interest may help children to:

1. Appreciate natural resources and their interdependence
2. Conserve natural resources
3. Use material resources wisely and creatively
4. Keep surroundings clean and pleasant
5. Share concern and enthusiasm for recycling with parents and neighbors
6. Cooperate with organized commercial ventures in recycling of paper, glass, cans, etc.

Every aspect of the early childhood program can be enhanced by the learning related to the use of recyclable materials. Recyclable materials can lead children from simple visual awareness, through motor involvement, into creative projects and cognitively oriented activities.

One of the more obvious creative uses of such materials is in the art area. Collages are a long-time favorite of preschoolers and necessarily result from a collection of materials. Gadget paintings or prints are derived from innurable sources. Under the guidance of teachers, plastic, paper, glass and metal containers evolve into vases, pencil holders, trash cans, litter bags for the car, puppets, etc. Paper mache has all the attributes of recycling; tearing down, mixing, rebuilding. Shredded newspapers soaked to a "pulp" stage, mixed with wallpaper paste, and rolled to one-fourth-inch thick "paper" is a convincing recycling demonstration.

The concept of a cycle or recycling is a natural characteristic of many scientific understandings. Experiments with ice melting to water, boiling to steam, condensing to water and freezing to ice offer dramatic evidence of the cycle effect. Observation of the decay process in the Halloween pumpkin before it is returned to the garden to enrich the soil suggests the reality of the cycle of plant life. Bacteria and other microscopic organisms change plants back into soil. Such soil makes good food for new plants. A scarecrow for the garden can be a happy arrangement of items which would otherwise be discarded. Careful observation of nests will reveal various materials which have been recycled by the birds, gerbils or mice.

Grandmother's traditional "button box" is a good example of children using a collection of small items for naming, labeling, classifying, categorizing, matching, sorting or counting. . . all beginning math concepts. Old clocks, scales, or other measuring devices add dimension to "how much," "how long," "more or less." Scales to weigh the papers accumulated from the paper drive followed by charting or graphing the results makes use of symbolization as children "read" the progress report. They become excited to find that their 2,000 pounds of paper will save 17 trees from being cut down. Their efforts are also rewarded when the paper collected is sold and the children "vote" to buy a specific item for the classroom. The cycle or circulation of money offers the possibility for a series of events which introduces more math concepts.

Wind chimes made from recyclable cans, tamborines from paper plates and soft drink bottle lids, horns from empty paper towel rolls and rubber band guitars are a few examples of "beautiful music" to the ecologist's ear. Recyclable bottles with screw-on lids filled with water are more likely to remain "tuned" for a longer period of time than open glasses due to lack of evaporation. However, evaporation is another opportunity to observe the cycle effect.

Many of the virtues of recycling are most evident outside the classroom. Walks to collect objects for disposal or recycling can instill respect for a safe, pleasant environment. Salvaging an old boat, mounting a steering wheel, collecting lengths of plastic or rubber tubing or using old tires for swinging enrich outdoor play. Combining strong cans and heavy string to produce "tin-can stilts" challenges the coordination of five-year-olds. Under the guidance of teachers, "tree houses" or "camps" absorb an unlimited number of recyclable items.

Matching games suggest the sources of certain material resources; trees produce paper, cotton produces cloth, seeds produce fruits and vegetables. Colorful scrap pieces of material collected at home produce beanbags.

Food offers so many rich sensory experiences it is hard to imagine a recycling unit without saving the recyclable cans after eating chocolate pudding, collecting the corncobs for future puppets or using leftover vegetables for soup; complete with a soup bone! Cold rice may be transformed into a delightful pudding and day-old bread serves hungry birds or children as it is made into French toast or bread pudding. Orange peelings boiled and dipped in syrup and granulated sugar offer a tasty demonstration of recycling. Reconstituting dry milk, eggs, fruit or vegetables suggests the value of preserving and recycling foods.

Dramatic play should be replete with examples of recycled materials such as 3-gallon ice cream containers for hair dryers, newspapers for hats, paper dry-cleaner bags or grocery sacks for costumes, large applicance cardboard boxes for a spaceship, store or post office. Colorful scraps of fabric, feathers, yarn, buttons, old socks and stockings produce a myriad of puppets. A discarded television set is a natural puppet stage after much dramatic play transpires with all those wonderful "insides" being removed and used for play materials after being checked for safety.

Appropriate books such as The Pile of Junk effectively carryout the theme of the recycling unit. Each item in the pile of junk is eventually claimed by someone who converts it into a useful or decorative item. Even loose cushion stuffing evolves into a "perfect thing to line a bird's soft round nest". Reading The Best Nest could spark a collection of bits of string, yarn, packing materials and straw to build nests with the help of mud or other appropriate adhesive material. Enjoying the Sweet Patootie Doll can be the beginning of animals, dolls or puppets from various fruits, vegetables or nuts.

The sense of sharing concern and enthusiasm for a common cause may well be the most valuable outcome. Thus parents and community workers coming into the school or the children going out to visit the community would be essential. Inviting parents to view The Lorax with their children would initiate meaningful discussions about saving trees. Field trips to deliver items collected for the recycling plant or to look for pollution in the streets, parks, rivers and sky of the neighborhood are sure to create an awareness that no one is exempt from the results of abusing resources.

The learning experiences described earlier offer the possibility of developing the following concepts:

1. Recycling is the continuous use of an item in many forms.
2. Recycling means to crush up and build again.
3. Recycling is necessary for the preservation of natural resources.
4. Recycling can be fun and creative.
5. Recycling reduces garbage, pollution, littering.

Finally, as children grow in their appreciation of natural and/or material resources is it too much to hope that they might even more so value human resources!

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Jean Durgin Harlan

# THE PAPER BAG PRINCIPLE

Planning interesting informal learning experiences that will involve young children is a major challenge for preschool teachers. Unfortunately, children sometimes overlook a new material or activity that the teacher has carefully tailored to extend their current interests and abilities.

When a new event fails to invite children's attention and participation, it may be time to apply the paper bag principle. This principle holds that almost any aspect of learning can be attractively introduced to young children by the use of a paper bag.

A simple test will convince a skeptic that the paper bag has pulling power. The teacher merely needs to sit quietly before a group of children with a paper bag on her lap to elicit a shower of eager questions about the contents of the bag.

What is the special charm of a drab, brown bag that draws distractable children into a state of hushed anticipation? Much like the magic stone that yielded splendid soup, the bag becomes a focal point that helps children temporarily put aside other concerns and stimuli competing for their attention. It also provides the "something just a bit different" that compels attention.

## Language and Logic Experiences

The aura of mystery and suspense surrounding a closed paper bag can help quiet children drop their reserve and join others in expressing ideas. To encourage language development, games requiring verbal responses from the children can be devised:

- Pass a feeling bag among a group of children, asking each in turn to add an idea to describe the contents (e.g.,"I feel something fluffy" . . . "I feel something soft.")
- Give each child in a small group a bag containing a single object for him to describe as clues for the others to guess.

To encourage logical thinking, gather a collection of like and unlike objects to pull out of a bag for the children to analyze. Suggest: "There are three things in my bag that are alike in one way, but not alike in other ways." Continue with other combinations of objects.

To stimulate logical and creative thinking, show children an empty bag. Ask each child what he could think of that would fit into a bag just that size. For the next round use a bag of a different size. Another time change the game by specifying a category of things that would fit into each size, such as food, toys or something that belongs in a house.

Premath Experiences

The paper bag principle can be used to vary the concrete premath experiences young children must have to build meaning for later symbolic work. A bag can offer fresh interest to familiar activities in several ways:

- Let children take turns drawing attribute shapes or other materials from a bag. The shape can then be located on a matrix or otherwise grouped in categories.
- Offer children tactile practice with size discrimination and seriation by providing them small bags of like objects in several sizes. Ask them to reach in without peeking to find the longest object in the bag . . . the next longest . . . the shortest object. The children can compare finds with one another to decide whether each has found the correct object. Unit counting rods can be pulled from one large bag to help children estimate lengths.
- For a counting experience in a new context, provide a grab-bag game using a large bag filled with bottle caps as the chief ingredient. Children take turns delving into the bag, grabbing as many bottle caps as they can hold in one hand, then counting the results. (Children love being able to scoop up as much as they can of these bottle caps. Sharing problems are minimal when materials are in such abundant supply.)

Science Experiences

Young children delight in gathering leaves, pods, stones, grasses and such on nature walks. These materials can be sorted, described, counted and used in art and premath experiences for many days. When interest in the collection flags, it can be revived by playing Match My Treasure:

- For as many children as can be seated at the science table, fill a small bag with more than one type of each category from the large collection.

In a leisurely way, show an item from your bag and ask the children to search for a matching item in their own bags. Young children can become absorbed in the detailed examining, questioning and comparing of their bag contents for a surprising length of time. Have magnifying glasses at hand to deepen the children's awareness of nature's intricacies.

- The Shopping Game makes authentic use of paper bags to develop a science understanding. After children have had some practical experiences with nutrition study, such as store visits and food preparation, bring in a grocery bag filled with real food or representations of edibles for the children to classify into the basic four food groups. Label each of four smaller grocery bags with a food group symbol. Let children put the items they correctly categorize into the appropriate food group bag.
- After children have had opportunities to experiment with the direct effects of magnets, let a paper bag introduce the idea that magnetic attraction can pull through other materials. Use an inverted paper bag as a stage for safety-pinned paper puppets, moving figures with magnets held inside the bag.
- To insure respectful handling of a special piece of science, equipment or material, a teacher can convey the need for care in the way she gently unveils the article from the science bag.
- Even the most insignificant specimen from the physical or natural world can be invested with special meaning for children by the teacher's attitude as she describes the contents of the bag she has brought to share with the class.

Some children soon recognize and make use of the curiosity-promoting paper bag technique. They spontaneously begin to bring their nature finds to school in paper bags, giving clues and soliciting guesses before showing their contributions.

Creative Movement

Use a bag of interesting objects as stimuli for creative movement. Pull out an object and ask the children to make themselves into a shape "as limp as this bean bag . . . as stretchy as this rubber band . . . as crooked as this twig."

Of course, paper bags have earned their place on preschool supply shelves for many other uses as well. A chief virtue in using bags is that children acquire play ideas to take home with them. Children can occupy themselves happily at home using this free raw material to duplicate the puppets, masks and costumes they enjoyed making at school.

A word of caution: any strategem for pleasurable learning needs to be handled with finesse to be effective. Overuse, or misuse to sugar-coat unsuitable activities and materials will render the paper bag principle ineffective. Used judiciously, however, the appearance of paper bags in the classroom will signal, "There's something intriguing in store."

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Nancy Ferreira

## GUIDE TO EDUCATIONAL COOKING IN THE NURSERY SCHOOL

-An Every Day Affair

Occasional cooking programs are finding their way into more and more nursery school programs, kindergartens and even some first, second and third grade classrooms. Teachers are seeking ways to involve children in cooking processes but perhaps don't have time, money or know-how to make cooking an individual, everyday happening. There is so much information that could be available to children about food--where does it come from, what happens when heat is applied, does it taste different, do all apples taste the same, how does peanut butter get that way? These are just a few of the hundreds of possibilities available for classroom exploration. Successful cooking projects do not just happen, they have to be carefully thought out and planned in advance, so that the children have the greatest opportunity to explore, experiment, discuss and discover the 'whys' for themselves.

### Why Cook Every Day?

Morning and afternoon snacktime is an accepted part of preschool and kindergarten programs, recognizing the need for nourishment at this time of day for young children. The snack is usually juice or milk and crackers and is placed on the table by an adult for the children. This follows the same pattern of most home settings where the adult places the food on the table for the child to eat. If cooking time replaces snack time, the children get the nourishment they need while learning about the world around them. They become involved by doing it themselves, learn cause and effect, and generate much joy and enthusiasm in the process. Young children see their mothers preparing food in the home and are eager to fix their own food, if given the opportunity and proper setting in which to do so. Everyday cooking allows time to repeat projects and gives the children self-confidence when they see a project they have done before: "Oh, I know how to do that, we did it before." Cooking skills can be acquired gradually through a graded program that assures each child success. Most children feel comfortable working with food and cooking time frequently becomes a favorite part of the school program . . . for both boys and girls. Every day cooking at school gives the children the feeling that they can do it themselves and these skills can be used in the home, especially if the mothers are willing to become involved in the program, too.

Children and mothers can bring their own cultural background into the cooking program. In this way some children may be introduced to a food they have never seen or tasted. This in itself is a revelation--to find that different people like different foods. Some children have developed a dislike for a food due to home pressures and use food as a tool to please or displease the parents by eating or not eating. In a school setting, children may see their friends eating and enjoying a food that they consider distasteful and may find that a particular food is not so bad after all. It can take many sessions of cooking to work through these eating problems. By cooking every day the children have the opportunity to experiment, alter and build new eating habits which may carry over into the home.

### Foods to be Stressed

A back-to-nature approach to foods leads a cooking program in the direction of fresh, unprocessed fruits, vegetables and dairy foods. Meat is usually limited in such a cooking program to keep the cost down. Starches should be de-emphasized unless a special lesson is to be gained in making a product the children don't ordinarily see at home, such as homemade noodles, homemade bread, bread on a stick or potatoes baked over charcoal. The use of sweets should be avoided unless there is a special reason to include them in a cooking project, as with a new texture experience of fried bananas served with syrup. Prepackaged mixes such as cake mixes, pudding or jello are "out" unless there will be fresh, cut-up fruit to mix in. Most children eat far too many starches and sweets for good nutrition and these foods are usually easily available to children in their own homes.

Some children think vegetables come from a box in the freezer and fruits come from a can on the shelf. Simply having the children prepare a fresh vegetable and taste it raw, then compare it with the cooked vegetable, can be a rewarding and instructive cooking project. Encourage the children to discuss whether they're eating the root (carrots), stem (asparagus), leaf (spinach), flower (artichoke) or the fruit (tomato) of the plant. Maybe someone has seen a certain vegetable growing or can find a picture of it to share with the group. This type of project may be expanded the next day to include the fresh vegetable compared with the frozen and canned product.

One of the main ideas in such a cooking program is to familiarize children with how the food grows, where the seeds are, how it smells, what part is eaten. The development of home and school gardens ties in naturally with this approach. Field trips to farms, chicken ranches or orchards during blossom and harvest time become more meaningful when the children have been working with these foods during cooking time. Many mothers can get the little extra incentive needed from the cooking program to start their own home garden for their child to share the experience with friends at nursery school. This child can tell others about planting, hoeing, watering and can pick the food from his or her own garden for cooking.

## Cooking Time: An Experience Not A Lesson

The less the adult needs to show and explain how-to-do-it, the more the children will learn from the project. The adult may need to do some preparation in advance, like peeling the tomatoes to be chopped, cooking the eggs to be peeled or precooking potatoes for chopping; but once the project is put on the plate, the children should feel free to experiment as they work with the food: to smell, eat, squish, chop, peel or whatever, without the adult correcting them (telling them they are doing it wrong). One project could be the making of a deviled egg sandwich; but many children will choose to eat the egg and bread separately and never touch the mayonnaise, and this must be all right. One can describe how to chop the egg in the bowl and mix in mayonnaise, then put it on bread. One can discuss how different people fixed their egg and bread to eat, and ask, where do eggs come from, was anything done to them before class, etc.?

This will be a real-life experience for the child only if he or she has his own place to sit and work at the table. This kind of experimentation cannot easily take place at a cooking activity center where an adult is supervising, grinding peanuts or beating eggs as a few children wander in and out to try a particular process. There is a place in a cooking program for the activity center type of cooking, but it should be very generously mixed in with individual cooking projects so each child has his own food to do with as he sees fit. One of the things he may choose to do with it is not touch it, just look it all over and watch the others, and this should be all right, too. The adult may explain that this child chose not to "cook" today, and maybe next time he will want to join in and find out what the other children are enjoying. This in itself may be a tremendous learning experience for that child who has to finish everything on his plate at home. One can be sure that by the end of the year, these same children are eating with gusto almost everything put in front of them. One can see the great advantage in repeating projects several times during the year to allow for experimentation.

### Activity Center

Some cooking projects, such as rolling dough into noodles, lend themselves especially well as an activity at a center with a small group of children choosing to come. Later, all of the children can sit at the tables and eat together. Those children who helped with the project can tell how it was done. Some projects, such as vegetable salad, may require several steps. A table for each activity could be set up with the children at one table washing and tearing lettuce, another table for cutting carrots and celery, and still another for grating cheese. It is probably better to have very young children do only one activity rather than organize the children and have them go from one activity to another. In this way, a several-step cooking project could be a community activity by talking about which children did which activity, so the whole group could enjoy the finished product.

An activity center can be combined with a demonstration of a more complicated recipe, as in making tacos. The children could grate cheese at the activity center as their part in the project, with tacos demonstrated later by an adult, for all the children to see. The grated cheese from the children's activity center would be used as their part in the recipe. Another time, the children could grind cranberries to be mixed with sugar on a hand grinder and have an adult then use a blender to demonstrate grinding cranberries with sugar. The children would watch the layer of white sugar combine with the layer of red cranberries to make a pink mixture. They can taste a little of both to experience the difference in texture. If the cooking project is going to change the shape or texture of a food, a little piece of the whole food on each plate helps them to compare the changes made without a lesson being made of it.

## Eating Time

All cooking projects do not require heat or actual "cooking," but rather food preparation. Most projects of this kind can be completed in one sitting by combining preparation and eating. Making sandwiches, or cutting and dipping raw vegetables into cottage cheese utilizes this technique. For those projects that require actual cooking, the preparation is done first; while the food is cooking under a mother's supervision, some children could watch the cooking process and the rest of the group could do something else. This might be the time to take a walk, listen to a story or sing some songs.

When making scrambled eggs, each child could crack his own eggs and beat it with a fork, then take it to the adult at the frying pan, wait for it to cook and take the cooked egg back to the table to be eaten. Grilled cheese sandwiches and French toast also can be done this way.

Slow eaters should be allowed sufficient time to enjoy their food without feeling rushed. A story can be read on a blanket near the cooking table or restful music can be played, so that the children still at the table can listen while eating without feeling left out (as they might) if their friends were to run off to an exciting activity away from them.

If a child does not want to eat what has been prepared that day, he could be encouraged to come to the table and "keep us company." If he doesn't like the food, he could still help prepare it for someone else.

In this way, most children would be drawn into the cooking project even though they don't (or can't because of allergies) eat the food. One idea might be to keep a box of crackers on the shelf for those children who are still hungry after the cooking project has been completed.

### PLANNING YOUR COOKING PROJECT

Date__________________ Project____________________

Type: all children prepare or small groups? (circle which)

Consider: foods in season, age of group and experience, season (hot or cold food best)

Reason for choosing project, in terms of children's learning: i.e., new food experience, entire process experience. other culture, texture changes in cooking, smell, similarities and differences in color(s), size(s) weight, thermal concept, small muscle skill experience, eye-hand coordination exercise or other.

Particular skill(s) you will stress: (limit number of skills for younger, may include several for older children), i.e., pouring, scrubbing, sorting, dipping, mixing, spreading, rolling, cracking, beating, juicing, grinding, cutting, peeling, food on a stick skills, grating, measuring, slicing, etc.

Equipment needed: (circle what you need to bring from home)

Ingredients you need to bring: (include quantity)

Procedure - step by step, including preliminary preparation if any and what assistant cooking mother can do.

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________
6. ____________________________
7. ____________________________
8. ____________________________
9. ____________________________
10. ____________________________

## Organizing a Cooking Program

A very successful way to organize a cooking program is to involve the mothers, to have them plan the project within the limits set, bring the food and utensils needed and present the project to the children. This has many advantages to both the cooking mother, her child and the cooking program as a whole. The mother could bring her own cultural background into the program. Her child can take part in choosing the project with his/her mother. In addition, there is much more carryover with children cooking in the home if the mother is involved. She would learn firsthand how much or little her child can do and, many times, find out that her child is capable of doing much more than she had thought possible. Also, the mother may come to realize how many prepackaged foods she has been buying and how few fresh fruits and vegetables she has been serving to her family. This is a positive and constructive way to encourage good nutrition in the home. Many times a mother can be encouraged to plant just one food in a home garden with the specific purpose of using this food in her cooking project later in the year. This can even provide a short field trip to that child's house to see the food growing or even to pick the food to be prepared for cooking that day.

Mothers could take turns as "cooking mother," with the next cooking mother as her assistant. This would allow the assistant cooking mother to see how it is done before her time to cook and would alert her as to which projects have been done before she plans her own cooking time. Both mothers would help the children with the preparation of the food and serving. A cooking coordinator would be responsible for the program running smoothly by telephoning the cooking mother and assistant beforehand. A night meeting could be devoted to cooking philosophy and a discussion of how-to-do-it. Those mothers who cannot or don't want to participate could find substitutes to take their places. If this is not possible, the teacher could run the cooking program on those days and find some way of helping the child of that family get special recognition from his peers.

For schools on a limited budget, the cost of the food could be kept at a minimum by having small portions prepared and tasted with the emphasis on tasting rather than eating. A daily shopping trip to the store could be planned to specifically buy the food for that day's cooking project.

Hopefully, in a day-long program, the money could come from the noon meal budget. Then one group of children or, if possible, the whole group, could fix one food as part of their lunch. Some day care centers have a cooking activity center permanently set up as part of their program. Since many of these children spend so much of their lives at school, it would seem to be of great value to the child and the center if the children could participate in meal preparation.

## Specific Cooking Projects

A well-planned cooking project is the secret to success with large groups of children. It is essential to bring enough equipment for every child to have the proper tools with which to work. If the "cooking mother" is concerned about whether she has the proper utensils or an ingredient that is missing, the children can pick up her concern and might become restless or lose interest. Every step needs to be written down for the beginner, since many times it is her first time to have so many children looking toward her for direction.

## Presenting a Cooking Project

A daily, nondirected, relaxed cooking time is the goal to keep in mind when organizing a cooking program for young children. Simple projects, well within the children's capabilities, will assure each child success and increased interest. If a project needs long explanations or too many specific steps to be followed, the children may soon become distracted. If the process is too difficult, the children will only learn that they need much adult help, or that this is another thing they can't do. It must constantly be emphasized that the cooking project should be simple, with no more than one or two steps to be followed.

One should try to choose projects that do not have a right and wrong way to do it. Children do not have the same standards as adults with a perfect end product in mind. If they have done it themselves, they will usually enjoy eating it, even if the food is burned, lumpy, undercooked or full of egg shells. The adult in charge of the cooking project must not make judgmental remarks such as: "Oh, too bad, yours got burned," or "I'm afraid we don't have enough time to cook the apples soft." Children have been known to devour, with relish, hard potatoes just barely warm enough to melt the butter and eat corn that was completely black on one side because someone forgot to turn the ears. A negative adult comment can destroy an otherwise successful flop if the children feel that the adult is critical of what they have made. It is not necessary to comment on the finished product at all, but positive statements like, "Umm, it smells good" or "Jody likes it" may encourage a doubtful child to take a bite.

As the children become more familiar with the routine of "cooking time," they can be encouraged to scrub the tables, put out the plates, collect the proper number of chairs and tell the other children that it is time to wash hands for cooking. One can encourage those who are ready to help clean up other areas so everyone can come to the table at the same time. Once the food is put out on the plates, those who are ready to begin to do their project should be allowed to rather than be stopped.

One can offer to demonstrate how to hold the knife for spreading or offer to help a child spread by putting one's hands over his to give him a feel of the right position.

During the eating time, the cooking mother could ask thought-provoking questions about the food and listen to the children's comments. This is a good time to bring out a vine, show pictures of the food growing or ask the children to find the seeds. One can ask whether this food was dug from the ground, picked from a tree or came from an animal. One should try to keep the cooking time child-oriented by not giving answers, only agreeing if they are right. Children can learn a great deal by arriving at their own conclusions through discussion with each other.

Cooking time should be fun. Some children may be used to arguments at the dinner table or stony silence, and it takes time to change this kind of pattern into one of pleasant socializing. There is more to be learned at the eating table than food preparation.

As the year progresses, the children can be encouraged to do more of the cleaning up if they show the interest. Most children find it fun to wash and dry dishes as an activity by itself. Dishpans with soap can be placed at a low level with a dish drainer and towels nearby. In the beginning an adult can wash the dishes with a child helper. As the children learn from modeling the adult, the adult can move on to be the dryer while the child washes. As more children are drawn into the activity, the adult can step out and let the children do it themselves. Even if the dishes need to be washed again after school, the children will have the satisfaction of following the cooking program through to completion.

## Suggested Cooking Program

The term "cooking" can be misleading if taken in the adult sense. One may regard the early projects in cooking as precooking experiences, such as sitting and eating at the table or comparing two kinds of cheese, or pouring juice. The children associate these early experiences as cooking at their level and this justifies using the term. The suggested cooking program which follows is to be used as a guide until the children become familiar with all of the various skills.

## SUGGESTED COOKING PROGRAM FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

One may remain longer on some skills or eliminate others that do not apply to the program. It is not necessary to actually cook with heat to have a successful cooking program. Do not confuse the children by asking them to do too many different things in one day.

1. Explore cooking tools with water (cups, bowls, beaters)
2. Measure and pour with dry ingredients (rice or corn meal)
3. Taste fresh fruit (one type at each session)
4. Compare fresh fruits (yellow, green and red apples)
5. Dipping (raw vegetables in sauce or liver in flour)
6. Scrubbing with brushes (carrots, celery or radishes)
7. Tear, break, snap (lettuce for salad, beans, peas)
8. Pouring (mark cups with rubber bands at stopping point)
9. Stirring and measuring (cocoa, carrots into mayonnaise)
10. Shaking (baby food jars with cream for butter, color coconut)
11. Spreading with table knives (butter, honey, cheese)
12. Rolling with both hands (cheese balls, meat, liver sausage)
13. Juicing with hand juicer (oranges, lemons)
14. Peeling with fingers (cooked eggs and potatoes, shrimp)
15. Cracking raw eggs (progress to scrambled or fried)
16. Cutting with table knife (progress from soft food to hard)
17. Grinding with hand grinder (peanut butter, cranberrries)
18. Beating with eggbeater (eggnog, meringue)
19. Peeling with scraper (carrots mostly but may try potatoes)
20. Grating with hand grater (cheese, carrots, fresh cocunut)

You may wish to start the cooking program with item 3 while having materials available from the first and second items off and on during the year. In general, two-year-olds can progress through item 15. Most three-year-olds can continue through item 18, and most four-year-olds are capable of mastering all of these skills. You may find that older fours also can cut with sharp knives with proper supervision.

## Integrating Cooking Time with the School Day

Cooking need not be an isolated part of the school day. There are many ways to bring scientific and mathematic concepts to the cooking table. Seeds found in food at the cooking table can be planted in the garden or food from the garden can be picked to be eaten at the cooking table. Green beans can be divided into thirds, apples can be quartered, peanuts can be counted.

Cooking experiences can be carried over into the sandbox or playhouse area by using old utensils from home for creative play in the sandbox. Carrots can be peeled in the playhouse area or peas shelled for a more realistic playhouse. Pea pods or walnut shells from the cooking table can be introduced in a water play area as boats. The art table can be enriched with lemons, potatoes and carrots for water-color stamping designs. Seeds can be dried for collage or corn silk can be dried for starch gluing.

An interesting activity for children is to have a large tub half-filled with 50 pounds of rice, with measuring cups, funnels, plastic bottles with lids for whatever creative play the children find. A large plastic container can be half-filled with flour and rice with a sifter available to sift out the rice. If food basic to another culture is being prepared that day, records from that country could be played, costumes and dolls displayed.

Small muscle development can be helped to a great degree with the use of cooking utensils. Eye-hand coordination and finger-thumb dexterity can be improved with such projects as peeling potatoes and eggs with fingers, or manipulating the carrot peeler.

Preschool is the ideal time to introduce cooking to children, as this is a less inhibited time for the child and one of great exploration and curiosity. It is surprising that an area as rich in learning potential as a cooking program has often been restricted to juice and crackers. A cooking program takes extra time, energy and money, but it is well worth the effort to introduce cooking as a daily activity for the returns in enjoyment and learning to child, teacher and parent.

Nancy Ferreria is Director and teacher of three-year-olds at Saratoga-Los Gatos Observation Nursery School, California.

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Alan Stewart

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

### The magic world of blocks!

Upside-down pyramids, cantilevers, rolling towers--an engineer tells about such magical things and how your children can build them. He also talks about the learning experiences in all that fun!

Give your children 50 machined softwood blocks and you give them the basic shape that man worked with for five thousands years and out of which he constructed three of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

The secret of building with blocks is, as in most other aspects of child development, direction. Direction is given by example, and inspiration follows as surely as summer follows spring. You can introduce young builders to the two basic configurations of structure, the tower and the bridge, by simply getting down on your knees and doing it yourself. They will look, they will inquire, then sooner or later they will build them.

A good foundation is all a thinking person needs to develop an understanding of a subject. In block building this can be as fundamental as the provision of a firm, flat base on which to work. A child cannot understand why he is unable to build so well on a thick pile carpet, but if he sees you prepare a base and erect on it a lofty tower he will follow willy-nilly. This is important. If his building falls because the carpet is soft he will not learn so quickly; if it falls because of poor design he will begin to learn by his mistakes.

Remember to never lose your interest. Your children are walking the same path that civil engineers trod in Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Britain. They are using the same basic shapes that engineers used, rectangular blocks of wood or stone. They are creating structures like those that the engineers created, which stood for a thousand years and in many cases stand today.

And now for the magic structures, the upside-down pyramid, the cantilever, the angled pair of blocks, the reinforced building, the rolling tower, and the extraordinary combinations of these that can tease the imagination of adults, let alone the young engineers who construct them. Your children will not call them by their proper names, they would like them less if they did. To the untutored mind a ramp is a slope, a cantilever is a reaching arm, and a truss is a window frame.

The magic structures are not difficult to build. They only require time and patience, commodities that young children have in abundance. They are elaborations of the basic directional concepts you introduced by example. But the structures that arise beneath the child's manipulative touch will be strange and different and above all fun. With them he will be able to span a space wider than his longest block. He will be able to build a raised house with a floor area many times that of its supporting column. He can impart a rigidity to a tower that it can never have by simply piling one block on another. He can cause an elevated row of blocks to fall in a beautifully timed sequence across a room to drop its final member neatly into a container, or send a delicately tiered structure tumbling to the ground. He might set a huge, elaborate tower moving gracefully on a pair of rollers with a push from his little finger without a block being displaced. Do not let your children be afraid to destroy their creations no matter how long they took to build. The crash of falling wood is magic to man's ears, causing him to raise up new structures from the debris of the old like a phoenix arising from the ashes. There are many ways to destroy a building, some of them very instructive. Your children will learn to use small blocks to break up the big, to test their strength and construction, and also to have fun. One day they will make a house that is more difficult to destroy this way and the concepts that fill their minds will span half a million years of insecurity in the human race.

It is necessary to remember also that this article could well be called "Fun with Blocks" because learning is fun. Your children are, above all else, perceptive; so do not pressure them to construct the things described on these pages. Let them see you playing with their blocks. They will quickly take them from you. But they will have seen what you were attempting in those brief seconds, and will want to emulate you. They will want to do better, and of course they will. And the magic ingredient that makes the pieces fly together under their touch will be the fact that they are having fun.

A two-year-old makes roads and higgledy-piggledy piles that look like futuristic cities. A three-year-old builds bridges, towers and simple houses without roofs. A four-year-old constructs large complicated hollow buildings. But a five-year-old, using blocks like extensions to his personality, makes strange things that stretch out arms, and grow fat with height, and roll or tumber across the room at a touch. Just you wait and see!

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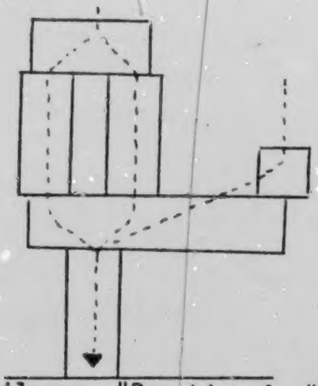
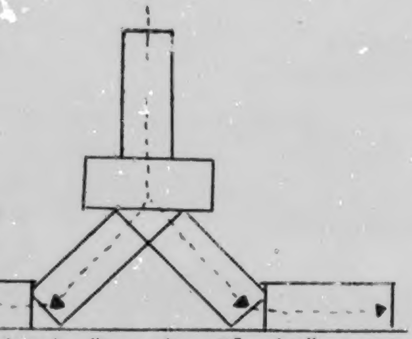
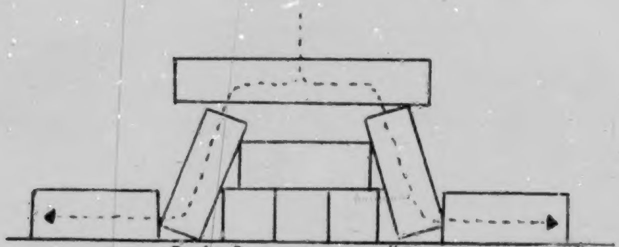


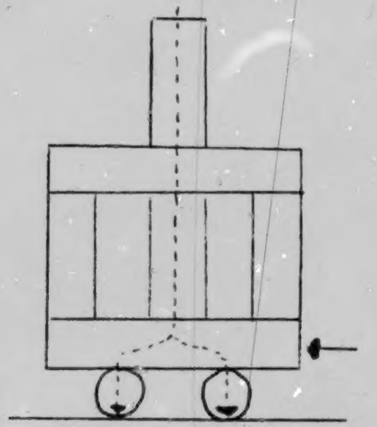
Cantilever--"Reaching Arm"



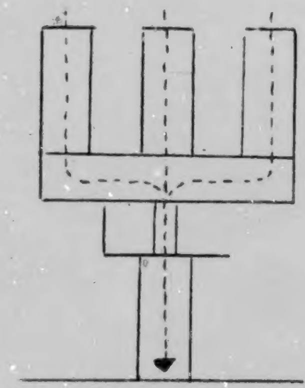
Tripod--"Leaning Blocks"



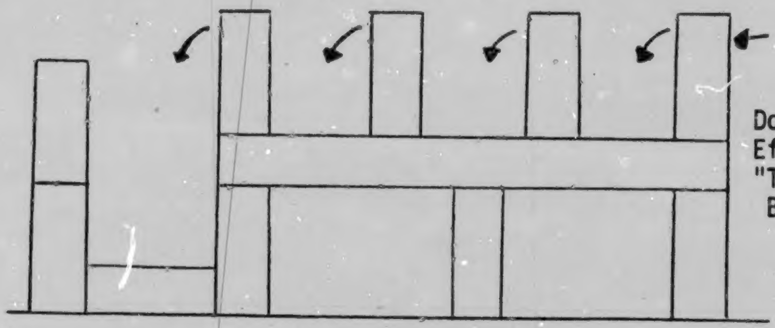
Reinforcement--"Strong House"



Rollers--"Moving House"



Pedestal--"Aerial Platform"



Domino
Effect--
"Tumbling
Blocks"

# SUGGESTED READING MATERIALS

Three, Four, Open the Door, by Susan Stein and Sarah Lottick. Follett Publishing Company, 1971 ($5.95). Ways of helping children (aged 0-6 years) have fun and learn through the use of paints, paper, clay, home-made toys and puppets. Also included are suggestions for scientific experiments, games, outdoor activities, lists of materials and songs, etc.

The World of Children's Games, by Arnold Arnold. New York: Times Mirror/World Publishing, 1972, page 346. $9.95. The authors tells us he is addressing himself "to parents, to teachers, to recreational, park, playground, and street supervisors of children's play, and to children." It is the latter segment that provides this reviewer with reason to include the book in a column devoted to reading for children, with the reserved hope that the concerned adults will find it here, for obviously it is a rich resource for them.

Its use by children may not be quite so obvious. However, it will prove helpful to outgoing youngsters working in community service programs at all levels. Young teens will find it supportive in their efforts, while extroverted ten-year-olds can convert their bossiness into mutually acceptable relationships, and shy but committed children can find here a reassuring way to help with the younger ones.

The 369 games and variations selected and adapted by Mr. Arnold range from those structured for four-year-olds through the strategic games that appeal to teen-agers. Fascinating details of the folklore and history behind the games will enlarge the reader's background, while an "Age, Place, and Materials Index of Games" and the diagrams provided by the author all will facilitate the book's use. There is a bibliography as well as a source list for the eighty historic pictures that enliven the book throughout. This is a clever book, a very useful book, and a book of wide appeal. Ages 10 up.

Black Is Brown Is Tan, By Arnold Adolf. Harper & Row Publishers, N.Y., 1973 ($4.95). A story-poem about a biracial family. The mother is black, the father is white.

Sunflowers for Tina, by Anne Norris Baldwin. Four Winds Press, N.Y., 1970 ($4.50). A story of an innercity child who wants to grow a garden.

Mary Jo's Grandmother and What Mary Jo Shared, by Janice May Udry. Albert Whitman & Co., Chicago, 1970 ($3.25). Two in a series of Mary Jo books depicting the experiences of a little black girl and her family.

*Timothy's Flower*, by Jean Van Leeuwen. Random House, N.Y., 1967 ($3.50). A bright yellow flower leads to new friendships on a busy city block in the ghetto.

*Mexicali Soup*, by Kathryn Hitte and William D. Hayes. Parents' Magazine Press, N.Y., 1970 ($3.95). The children and father in a Mexican-American family learn a lesson after insisting that Mama make her special soup without its "Mexican" ingredients.

*Abby*, by Jeannette Caines. Harper Junior Books, N.Y., 1973 ($3.95). Abby's an adopted little girl who's very close to her new family.

*The Black B C's*, by Lucille Clifton. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., N.Y., 1970 ($3.95). Famous black people, past and present are described in alphabetical order. Written for elementary school children, but can be adapted for preschoolers.

*Chicanos*; *Eskimos*; and *Indians*, by Patricia Martin. Parents' Magazine Press, N.Y., 1971 ($3.78 ea.). Part of a series dealing with the histories, lifestyles, and contributions of various ethnic groups. Written for elementary school children, but can be adapted for preschoolers.

*What Do I Do?* and *What Do I Say?*, by Norma Simon. Albert Whitmen & Co., Chicago, 1969, 1967 ($3.95 ea.). Two books describing young children's everyday experiences. Text is given first in English, then in Spanish.

*Hongry Catch the Foolish Boy*, by Lorenz Graham. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., N.Y., 1946 ($3.95). The parable of the prodigal son comes alive in this colorful book written in an African idiom.

*Santiago*, by Pura Belpre. Frederick Warne & Co., Inc., N.Y., 1969 ($3.95). Presented entirely in Spanish, this story describes a ghetto child's efforts to acquaint his friends with the beauty and history of Puerto Rico through pictures and his grandfather's artwork.

*Primer for Parents of Preschoolers*, by Edith G. Neisser. New York: Parents Magazine Press, 1972. page 320. ($5.95). Edith Neisser believes that time spent and effort put into helping our preschoolers (ages three to six) master tasks in development, acquire suitable skills, and form effective relationships will pay off ten years later when they are approaching adolescence. She stresses the integrated nature of a preschooler's physical, mental, emotional and social attributes and the importance of respecting individual differences.

Written in an orderly and informative way, the book covers a multitude of topics ranging from "Questions Need Honest Answers" to "Encouraging Independence." Every parent has worried and wondered about helping his child get along with others, gauging the time and place for reward or punishment, determining how sexual identity develops, and understanding sex play among young children. Mrs. Neisser faces these with a common-sense outlook and the realization that dealing with a preschooler can be exhausting, as well as challenging and exciting

Reading this book about young children and how they grow through love and friction with the people around them is thought-provoking as well as entertaining.

The Good For Me Cookbook, by Karen B. Croft. San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 4843 Mission Street, 1971. page 70 ($1.95) plus 30¢ postage and 10¢ sales tax for California residents. Tried and tested recipes that allow very young children to participate in the preparation comprise this attractive small book. The author's objective was to help children develop a taste for a variety of foods. Her recipes include many health food ingredients that could provide substitutes for the more commonly known sweets children relish. Old Chinese recipes for simple, substantial yet delicious main dishes add to the appeal of the collection. From appetizers to desserts, the foods are different enough to be enticing and yet basic enough to make it possible for almost any cook, young or old, to prepare.

Of particular value are the suggestions for the adult supervisor, telling explicitly how children can share in the preparation.

More than 100 activity suggestions for young children are offered in I Saw a Purple Cow, an attractively illustrated paperback written by the women who started PAR (Parents As Resources). Easy-to-follow directions in recipe form. For parents, teachers, babysitters and others involved with young children. (Little, Brown and Company, 1972, $2.95)

Baby Learning Through Baby Play, A Parent's Guide For The First Two Years, by Ira J. Gordon, 1970. St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, N.Y., ($3.95). The games described in this book for parents are designed to do several things. First, they will help the baby develop basic skills such as focusing the eyes, coordinating the eye and hand, and distinguishing differences among almost identical objects. Second, once he has these basic skills, he needs to become aware of how the skills can be useful in exploring the world around him. Third, the baby will learn that learning is enjoyable. Fourth, this confidence about what he is and what he can do will be enhanced by his growing trust in the parents. The games are described and illustrated under the following headings: Games for the Early Months; Games for the Sitting and "Lap" Baby; Games for the Creeper-Crawler; Activities for the Stander and Toddler; and Activities for the Older Toddler.

Sesame Street Magazine, monthly (except August and September). North Road, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., $3.00 per year. Follows TV show characters and cartoons. Seeks to help child interpret pictures, do some drawing, see letters and numbers. Suggested activities are designed for 3- to 5-year-olds (with parental guidance), but some could be used with slow readers in early elementary years. Inexpensively printed on newsprint, with color.

## CREATING WITH MATERIALS FOR WORK AND PLAY

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from Association for Childhood Education International

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### NEW BULLETIN ON USES OF WASTE MATERIALS

Washington, D.C., August 1, 1967--From the ashes of the old--like the phoenix--the new emerges! The Association for Childhood Education International announces publication of a brand new bulletin to take the place of Some Uses for Waste Materials, long out of print but still in demand.

BITS & PIECES: Imaginative Uses for Children's Learning is completely new except for the classic "Foreword" written by Frances Berry to the first edition. Expanding technology, new concepts in coordinating skills with learning, and a widening recognition of the wisdom of nurturing resourcefulness in children have gone into the writing. The articles, divided into three major sections, are by fifteen classroom teachers, educators whose specialties are in such fields as outdoor education or art education, and Head Start experts. Art, mathematics, science, music, language arts, dramatic play and social studies are represented in the large, middle section on curriculum learning. Here is a comprehensive, understanding, practical (but not merely a how-to-do-it!) bulletin for teachers, aides, parents--for all those who work with children.

Itemized lists, concise explanations within articles indicate uses for the abundance of finds, leftovers and giveaways--the BITS & PIECES for children's learning.

Illustrated with halftones and many sketches. Bibliography.

72 pages . . . $1.25

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# YOUR CHILD--FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

## A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS WHOSE CHILD IS ENTERING SCHOOL

National Association of Elementary School Principals
National School Public Relations Associate
1201 Sixteenth Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

## A Beginning

This is a story with a beginning, but no end.

It's mostly about one child--yours. It's also about his teachers, including you. And it's full of drama, humor, perhaps a few tears, and hopefully a lifetime of learning.

Your child is starting to school, an important time he shares with his playmates and about four million other young children across the country this year. Perhaps he is one of the growing number of youngsters who first come to school as a four- or five-year-old, but most likely he is entering at the first grade or primary level. This is a big step--into a new place all day, new people to play and work with, demands upon the use of time, the opening up of all sorts of ways to satisfy his curiosity--but it isn't his first step toward learning.

That was taken years ago when your child was an infant and just beginning to notice what was around him. You encouraged him to smile and laugh, to talk, to walk, to be curious and adventurous (within limits), to ask questions, find answers, and to share his world with others. In other words, you were his first teacher.

Now, someone else--or several other persons--will begin to share that responsibility with you. That basically is what this little booklet is about, the ways in which parents and the home build together with teachers and the schools a common understanding and concern for very young children.

You started your child on a lifetime of learning. It's time for school to do its part.

## AT HOME    THE EARLY YEARS

Not so long ago he was a baby, but like one of those rapid photo images of growing things, your child quickly changed from infant to toddler to the "terrible-two" and on through the pre-school years. Each day was a learning experience that added its part to your child's awareness of himself, his family, and the environment around him.

Most parents haven't formally studied child behavior, but more and more of them are aware of the enormous opportunities they have to influence the learning abilities of their young children. Books, magazines, TV and community programs are spelling out what educational psychologists, until a few years ago, generally confined to their own profession--that the early years in the home are the most important of a person's life.

Your child has depended upon the little things--what you gave him to play with, where you took him, his friendships, the time you spent with him. And one big thing--your encouragement and delight in his growing up. He will continue to need this kind of support as he goes through school.

## AT SCHOOL

Just as young children are a special breed because they are young, so teachers and classrooms for the early years of school are special, too.

You may not know exactly who such people as Piaget, Bruner, and Kagan are, but most teachers of young children are learning more and more about these researchers of child behavior and how their theories can apply to the classroom. Perhaps they were introduced to the speciality of early childhood education when they were studying to be teachers; experienced teachers go back to school or take in-service courses to keep themselves professionally up to date.

A parent, for example, may see a child finally tying his shoelaces correctly and think that repetition and increasing coordination of little fingers achieved the success. A teacher with extra training in early childhood education, however, recognizes that this act involved not only these achievements but also memory, concentration and an awareness of spatial relationships.

Educators now generally accept the premise that the early years--up to age six--are the most crucial learning years, but they also know that intelligence is not fixed, that stimulation and encouragement can influence children's abilities to think at any age.

While teachers have been receiving special training for young children, many of the "tools" for learning--the materials used for teaching--have changed and improved to accommodate better approaches to learning.

## LEARNING TO CHANGE

### AT HOME

Can you remember when you started to school? That was most likely more than 20 years ago, give or take a few years. There were a few new buildings then and they probably were crowded; there was one teacher to a classroom of children all about the same age. You were lucky to have a movie projector to use, much less a TV set in the classroom. Other things might have been changing, but the schoolroom was much as it was when your own parents were in school.

You weren't too concerned about interplanetary travel or New Cities, communication satellites or ocean farming, or breakthroughs in medical science and education and environmental quality. These constantly evolving ideas and accomplishments are a way of life for your child, and always will be. This makes it especially important that today's young children acquire a love of learning from the very beginning of their education, which is why the teachers and administrators in your school keep searching for better ways to teach each child.

This doesn't mean that the basic needs of your child have changed. From his parents a child must have affection, recognition, praise, limits, and fairness--the same qualities that every child always has needed for self-confidence and maturity. What is different is that today's parents, more than at any other time, know or can easily find out how to understand and help their children mature.

## AT SCHOOL

Schools are, hanging, too.

On the outside they may be hexagonal or domed, without outside windows, or all windows. Possibly your school is the same kind of red brick building that you knew as a child, but inside it probably is quite different.

If your child is entering at the first grade, you will still see books (more of them, more paperbacks for children, probably less dependence upon workbooks). Children will be learning math by counting--yes--but often with Cuisenaire rods or measurements of sand and water, not in the abstract way that you learned it. Desks may be moved into groups instead of rows; there may be carpeting on the floor and special corners for reading or science or drama. Children may be making their own films or tape recordings, using the new media as well as watching.

If your school is working with the "open classroom" concept, you may never hear a teacher lecture to a whole class. Several teachers will be working with children of varied ages in small groups or one at a time. Older children may be helping younger ones with their studies. Groups of children will be doing a variety of things at the same time (the noise level may disturb adults, but it is natural for children to be active and enthusiastic).

These changes have one purpose in mind--to treat each child as an individual who comes to school with abilities all his own that need to be motivated and challenged to get the most out of learning and life.

## EACH CHILD IS DIFFERENT

### AT HOME

If you have more than one child or the children of friends and relatives close by you can see firsthand the uniqueness of each one of them. It may be easy to persuade one child to put away his toys, and an endless struggle to get a brother or sister to do the same; one eats fast, another slowly; one liked books right away, another wanted to use them for baseballs.

You provide for each child's basic needs. You understand the encouragement and direction that each one must have. But you also recognize and appreciate the differences that set them apart.

### AT SCHOOL

Providing for the differing needs of each child is a big motivation behind the changes going on in education.

The more teachers and their trainers learn about child development, the more they are able to understand how an individual child learns best. Some call this "humanizing" the classroom.

It is now generally appreciated, for example, that not every child is ready to read when he enters first grade (some may already be reading, others may not be motivated for many months). This does not disburb teachers; they know that all children will read at their best level if they are not under pressure to live up to artificial standards.

Not all educational programs are alike, nor do all teachers have the same methods--uniqueness is a part of their world, too--but the goal of a good teacher is to help each child reach his fullest potential.

## PREPARING FOR LEARNING

### AT HOME

The parent should be doing more important things than drilling the ABC's into his preschooler. Preparing for the beginning of school is a much larger task than giving him a head start on the academics of learning.

In the classroom he will learn to read and to count, but only at home can the young child learn essential skills that will help him adjust to and get the most out of school from the very first day. From his family a child learns . . .

To be curious, inquiring, not satisfied until he has the right answers to his questions.

To express himself well, not afraid to ask questions, eager to tell what he knows.

To follow through on projects, to not be satisfied until something is finished as best he can do it.

To be interested in the qualities of things (big, little, similar, dissimilar).

To respect the viewpoints and property of others.

Actually the skills that a child enters school with come from the value that his family has placed on helping him gain self-confidence.

## AT SCHOOL

Your child will begin his formal education as soon as he enters school, but you may not recognize it as learning. A teacher or a teaching team have much to do before the children in their care do the reading, spelling, and counting that most of us define as getting an education.

Teachers want to build upon the abilities that each child brings into a new classroom (and this will be true all through his school years), but before the program can be individualized there are some basic skills and attitudes that the school will want to foster in its beginning students. Teachers will prepare children for learning by:

*Helping each child adjust to the structures and the freedoms of the classroom. These will vary even within a school building, but the general goal will be to establish limits that benefit a child working by himself or within a group. The emphasis is not discipline, but self-discipline.

*Evaluating each child's capabilities. This will be done in several ways--testing, observation, using health and other types of records. All kinds of abilities influence a child's readiness for formal learning--even such things as attention span and eye-hand coordination. A teacher also will want to know a child's main interests and enthusiasms, because these may be the clues to helping him want to learn.

*Providing a stimulating environment. The teacher, of course, wants each child to feel at home as quickly as possible with his new surroundings and new friends. At the same time, however, a teacher will choose beginning activities, projects, and visual surroundings that are richly stimulating, that will set a tone from the very first of enjoyment, excitement, and challenge.

## PREPARING FOR READING

### AT HOME

Undoubtedly, there is no subject as important to parents as having their children learn to read. But have you ever stopped to think just how long your child has been learning to read? It is not an activity that begins the day he enters school--he started years ago, and how ready he is for what he will learn in the first year of school depends upon what he has learned through informal ways.

He will be better prepared if his experiences at home have taught him to value books and other reading materials. He will value the art of reading if he hears parents and family discussing things they have read, shares reading time with them, has his own library and knows how to use the public one.

Also helpful is a young child's ability to concentrate for longer periods of time, to listen to the full meanings of words and sentences. Encouraging him to express himself verbally gives him a feel for words, a richer vocabulary.

The more he sees and discusses--on travels, trips to museums, galleries, or even walks through the woods or city--the more he is curious, the more he wants to express himself, the more he is ready to read.

### AT SCHOOL

There are almost as many methods for teaching reading as there are teachers (or book publishers), and after much study of the subject educators generally conclude that a good teacher uses several methods or combinations of them to teach reading to each child in a class. Parents who come to school with a preconceived notion of how it should be done are being unfair to the teacher and to their child. Not too long ago one could walk into a first grade room and see all the children reading from the same line of the same page of the same book. It isn't like that anymore, because teachers know that children are not all the same, and they have the training and the tools to make education fit the child.

Individualized teaching, which is beginning to dominate the life of the primary years in school, provides a wide choice of books, workbooks, and teacher-made materials. The child selects resources at his level and works either by himself, with teacher direction, or in a reading group. Frequently activities in other areas--science, social studies, art--are the things that stimulate an interest in reading.

If the teacher were to explain in educational terms what the approach is in reading, each parent in a classroom might hear a different prescription--phonics, word recognition, the Initial Teaching Alphabet.

The point is that learning to read is an enormous challenge that young children will meet enthusiastically--if they believe in themselves and in the concern of the teacher for their own individual strengths and limitations.

## PREPARING FOR LEARNING WITH OTHERS

### AT HOME

When a child enters school, the circle that has nurtured and protected him--the family--grows bigger and bigger. Now he must cope with new authorities (teachers and principals) and with at least 20 other classmates, many of whom will be strangers and some of whom may not even be easy to form friendships with. He can be just as secure in this larger circle if he has learned at home how to share himself with others.

Most families in urban areas have available to their children preschool experiences--public and private nurseries and kindergartens. But even if these are not available or you do not take advantage of them, your child will gain immeasurably from the experience of being in an organized group of young children. Play groups with relatives and neighbors teach young children how:

*To share their things
*To plan and carry out activities with others
*To listen
*To be patient

If your child has learned these things before he comes to school, he will "fit in" with ease.

## AT SCHOOL

Entering into the larger world of the classroom provides your child with many new opportunities for socializing, but in the beginning he may feel this is more of a threat than a comfort. Teachers, building upon the social skills learned at home, will want each child to feel secure in his new surroundings and confident in being able to work with others.

Teachers want to help each child learn:

*To give and take within a group

*To want to take part in group activities and direct them

*To handle friction when working with others

*To help others with their work and projects

*To respect the viewpoints and property of others

These are not easy things to learn--children grow slowly out of their natural self-centeredness--but they are a necessary part of learning for children to become leaders, rather than followers, involved rather than passive members of the society they will be a part of in the future. The early years in school set the patterns for years to come.

## PREPARING FOR SELF-RELIANCE

### AT HOME

The other side of the coin--becoming independent--is another essential of a maturing child. Yours has swung between clinging to the security of being cared for and being told what to do all the way to the other end of the pendulum--stubborn assertion of himself, wanting to do everything his way.

He has gradually learned independence if you have allowed him to make decisions that he is capable of coping with, encouraged him to be satisfied with doing things by himself (what kind of answers do you have for that eternal complaint, "But I have nothing to do"?), taught him to take care of his things properly. Parents should be sensitive to the unique way that each child has of asking for help; otherwise, they will miss the opportunities to help him become independent.

Parents will save the time of everyone in the classroom and perhaps avoid embarassment for their children if they prepare them to be self-reliant at school. You should educate yourself in order to help your child--visit the school beforehand (most invite incoming children to observe or visit the school in the spring before the beginning of their school year). Find out about the basic routines and procedures. Such an insignificant thing as not knowing what to do with lunch money can shake the confidence of any eager child. Many teachers try to meet parents and children before school opens--don't be hesitant to find out about the simple things as well as the broader programs that may interest you more. Little things are very important to little children trying to grow bigger.

## AT SCHOOL

Teaching a child to be an independent thinker is the ultimate goal of education.

But it begins with very simple things in the first years of school. Your child will gradually learn how to take on the responsibility of doing things on his own and eventually initiating them. He will want to follow through and complete his work. He will become adept at problem solving and decision making that draw upon his own ideas and knowledge.

To do these things, however, a child must be able to feel secure with his independence.

When he comes to school he should be able to identify himself--know his full name, address, phone number, and the names of his parents and their occupations. He should not be afraid to ask questions, nor should he stubbornly refuse to accept direction.

In order to feel secure and open in school, your child needs a positive idea about his teachers, his classmates, his school. Don't describe them as threats to his enjoyment ("If you don't do this right, your teacher will be mad"). Negative attitudes from parents will make children more dependent upon the world they are coming from--the home--and less upon themselves.

## CARING FOR SELF

## AT HOME

A child learns respect for his physical self primarily at home. It is the standards--and the good health habits that they foster--set by his family which are so important to helping him care for himself away from home.

Regular physical and dental checkups assure parents and children that they are in good health. Local schools will inform parents of the necessary immunizations and medical records for beginning students.

Young children need at least 12 hours of sleep each night, and plenty of time before school for a nutritious breakfast and dressing properly. Your child should know basic habits of cleanliness, such as flushing the toilet and washing his hands.

Teach your child the proper kind of behavior for riding the school bus--that the safety of all those on the bus is the over-riding concern. If he walks to school, teach him safety rules about crossing streets and walk with him a few times to select the safest route, even if it may be longer.

He should wear clothing suitable for the weather which is easy to take off and on (outer wear should be marked with the child's name).

## AT SCHOOL

A warm, friendly, understanding teacher will help your child feel "at home" when he comes to school for the first time. But teachers are not substitute mothers. They will expect children to take care of their simple, basic needs--or else they will have to spend precious school time on habits that should have been formed at home.

At school your child should be able to take off and put on his own coats, boots, gloves (that's why it is important that zippers and buttons should be reachable and workable). He should always put them up in the place provided.

He should be able to go to the bathroom by himself and understand that he must ask permission so that not too many children will be out of the classroom at one time. Good cleanliness habits are particularly important where many children are using the same facilities.

Children who are suspected of being ill should not be sent to school. A coughing or sneezing child is a threat to everyone else in the classroom. Doctors generally recommend that children who have been running a fever should stay at home at least one day after the temperature returns to normal. If both parents work, arrangements should be made before the child enters school for emergency care. Young children should not be required to act as if they are well when they aren't--just because parents have not prepared for emergencies.

## SHARING THE LEARNING

### AT HOME

Strangers don't have much to say to each other. If you don't know your school and its teachers, and they don't know you and the attitudes you have about your child's learning, neither one of you will be able to help your child learn.

This isn't an invitation to be a "pressure parent"--one with, preconceived ideas about what the school can do for your child who tries to impose these ideas upon child and teacher alike. Teachers find this kind of communicating a frustrating experience which they will try to avoid.

These are, however, many satisfying ways in which parents and teachers can work together.

As a parent you should make personal contact with your child's teacher, not just the school. You should use all opportunities to observe in classrooms (at the invitation of the teachers); you should show interest in what your child is learning and learn about his attitudes, his concerns, and school experiences. You should know enough about the school program to form intelligent opinions that cannot be influenced by uniformed opinions.

Your openness and concern about the school will encourage teachers to communicate with you--to discuss ideas, call upon you for extracurricular help, be frank with you if there are problems.

The channels are many--PTA organizations, community advisory groups, the work of room mothers and classroom committees, regular parent-teacher conferences, and consistent interest in what your child is doing. How much parents share in their child's learning depends upon their initiative.

### AT SCHOOL

Earlier we discussed "open classrooms" and how these were tailoring education to the individual needs of children.

In a sense, parents may now participate in "open schools," with their part of the learning process dependent upon their time, talents, and interests.

In early childhood education, particularly, parents are being brought into the classrooms as teacher aides and volunteers where they have a direct relationship with children in the learning process.

But even if you do not participate this way, teachers welcome parents who have special interests they can share with the children, who can contribute small amounts of time--e.g., field trips, mounting art exhibits--or whose professional background can help a teacher enrich the curriculum.

In some schools parents and teachers are working together to plan the educational program for a child--the parent learns what is required of his child and learns how to help him at home. In others, there are advisory groups, where principals, parents, teachers, and students work together.

## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

### AT HOME

Almost everything we have said so far was to help parents and child prepare for the future. It involves a delicate balance of learning basic skills and attitudes with being prepared for the unknown, in social relationships as well as academic achievements.

No one can accurately predict what family life will be like in the future. No matter how much our environment changes, however, the basic needs of children for affection, understanding, encouragement--the things that lead them to their own selfhood--will not change. And so, neither will the influence of the home, and its importance not only as a child enters school but throughout his school years.

### AT SCHOOL

Schools are in the business of change because they are constantly seeking better ways to educate young people. Change can take many forms, such as the use of space and organizational patterns which we have discussed. It may show in the use of resources--updating curriculum, using technology to create individual learning programs. It will show in the deepening professional knowledge of teachers about how children learn.

And although these innovations may vary from teacher to teacher and school to school, there is one indisputable trend in education--the increasing role of parents as constructive partners in the never-ending process of learning.

## HOW TO FOSTER CREATIVITY

*From the time he is an infant select the toys and other manipulative resources that are appropriate for his level.

*Provide as many resources in the home as possible--art work (scrap materials are as much fun for a child as expensive paints); books (there are many series of inexpensive paperbacks for the child old enough to be interested in books); simple musical instruments.

*Use all of your local resources to stimulate your child's curiosity--the zoo, the library, nature walks, museums, galleries, puppet shows.

*Encourage your child to express himself about all that he sees, hears. Ask him to tell you stories, compose poems that you can write for him.

*Teach him to sort and classify things; e.g., by color, number, or other common characteristics.

It is very important that every activity you plan for your child includes you. When you give him an art project, sit down and do it with him for a while, at least. Sing and play musical instruments with him. Don't just hand him a ball; show him how to hold it and throw it. It is fine for parents to want to give their children all the possible advantages, but the children will get more out of these advantages if they share them with parents.

## READING READINESS IN THE HOME

*Needless to say, the example of parents sets the attitudes about reading in children. If you read a lot, your child will want to. If you have books and magazines and newspapers, your child will want his own collection. If you use the local library, so will he.

*Help your child be sensitive to sounds. Always speak clearly and in complete sentences.

*Stimulate his attention span in reading. For example, choose adventure stories with quick or surprise endings, but stop before you've finished and ask him to make up his own ending to the story.

*Provide a quiet place for reading. If he does not have a room of his own, he should have at least a corner that is his--for his books and other belongings.

*Establish a quiet time. There should be some time set aside each day from the time he is an infant for quiet reading, preferably just before bedtime.

*Provide a balance in stimulating entertainment. Parents would be wise to limit both the quantity and quality of the TV programs their children watch. If they become too accustomed to being a passive viewer, they will miss many of the exciting challenges of childhood. Many TV programs provide a takeoff point for parents to interest their children in books, science, fantasy--but parent participation again is the key. Children whose parents watch such programs as Sesame Street with them come to school better prepared than those who watch by themselves.

## FOSTERING SELF-RELIANCE

*Help your child learn to take care of his things promptly and correctly, and be willing to do so.

*Give him responsibilities around the home that genuinely make him feel a part of the family, such as regular care of pets, help in the kitchen, appropriate errands.

*Let him participate in things that are important to him, too, such as ideas for decorating his room, selection of clothes--given with positive guidance that he appreciates rather than rejects.

*Give him practice in handling small change, purchasing items at the store, for example.

# PARENT'S WORD LIST

| | |
|---|---|
| Achievement Test- | Usually given at the same time each year to measure the progress of students in basic subjects. |
| British Infant School- | A system of organization and teaching in Great Britain in which younger children, usually ages 5 through 7, are grouped together. Teaching is individualized and built around a child's interests. Open or ungraded schools in the United States received much of their inspiration from the infant schools. |
| Cognitive Development- | An approach to learning in which a child matures by building upon experiences. Each stage of learning depends upon the previous stage and the readiness of the child to go further. |
| Cumulative File- | A central file maintained by many schools which contains the academic, health, and other records of each student year by year. |
| Diagnostic-Prescriptive Teaching- | A part of an individualized school program in which teachers and other school personnel determine the educational needs of each child (through tests, observation, etc.) and prescribe an individual program for the child. |
| Electric Company- | A series of TV programs, patterned after Sesame Street, which is directed at an audience of first through third graders. |

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| Learning Center- | An arrangement usually found in open classrooms where certain parts of the room are set aside for specific subject interests, such as reading, math, and science. |
| Nongraded or Ungraded School- | As compared to a traditional school, where children are grouped together according to age and progress one year at a time, the ungraded school groups children according to ability, usually by subject rather than general ability. Instead of being a third-grader, an eight-year-old child might be working with children older than he in reading, and younger than he in math. |
| Open School- | Uses the cross-age grouping concept of the ungraded school, but adds other elements to make learning as 'open" as possible for children. Children are partners in determining how and what they will learn, and their special interests frequently are the motivation for learning, even in the basic skills. The open classroom or school uses team teaching, learning centers, and individualized instruction. |
| Media Center- | A term frequently used to describe the "new" library. Resources include not only books and magazines, but films, filmstrips, tapes, and records as well. Many provide individual carrels for private study; some have closed circuit |

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| Follow-Through- | A federally financed program which extends the benefits of preschool (Head Start) special programs for disadvantaged children into the first years of regular school, usually up to the third grade. |
| Head Start- | A federal program for preschool children, ages 3 through 6, who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Small classes, individual attention, medical and counseling services, and stimulating play and learning resources are directed at helping the children prepare for the first grade. |
| IQ Test- | IQ stands for "intelligence quotient." An IQ test measures a person's ability to think at the time of the test, but it is generally believed that intelligence is not fixed and the test scores may change with maturity. |
| ITA- | These initials stand for Initial Teaching Alphabet. This is a method of teaching reading in the early grades which uses a 42-character alphabet to represent each sound in the English language, instead of the 26 characters of standard English. Transition to the standard alphabet is made after a child has acquired skill and self-confidence in reading. |

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| | TV where a student can draw upon a central data bank for programs and films to meet his special needs. |
| Programmed Instruction- | A method for individualized instruction that allows a student to work at his own rate of ability through the use of workbooks, special materials, or technological equipment. A student works with the materials on his own. He must complete a unit correctly before going on to another one. |
| Schools Without Failure- | A school-wide approach to learning in which a child's abilities and efforts count more than a numerical grade. A term generally applied to schools that are oriented around individual instruction. |
| Sesame Street- | A highly successful TV program for preschool children, which uses entertainment to stimulate learning. Its aim is to prepare children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, for first grade. |
| SRA Reading Materials- | Widely used by the schools, these are color coded programmed reading materials. Children progress from one color set to another, as their reading skills improve. SRA stand for Science Research Associates, Publisher of the materials. |
| Words in Color- | Another basic learning-to-read program, which emphasizes whole word identification through the use of color. |

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| Team Teaching- | A technique usually found in ungraded schools and open schools, where teachers work together as a team, rather than in the traditional one teacher, one classroom arrangement. Team teaching takes advantage of the individual abilities and interests of each teacher (one may specialize in reading, another in math). A teaching team may also include student teachers, aides, and volunteer workers. |

Resources For Parents

Your school is one of the best resources for parents. Classroom teachers, of course, are the first and most important source for information and advice. School principals are there to help parents as well as teachers. Special resource persons within the school, such as counselors and librarians, also serve the parent community as well as students.

Your local PTA or other parent organization is the best contact for finding out about how parents can communicate with schools and learn more about them. PTA groups have available to them a wealth of material prepared for parents about education.

Other organizations which publish resources available to parents include:

Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, D. C. 20016 (has many low-priced pamphlets about children, arts and crafts for them, helping them to learn).

Child Study Association of America, Inc., 9 E. 89th St., New York, N.Y. 10028. Books and pamphlets to help parents of children from birth through adolescence.

U. S. Government Printing Office, Division of Public Documents, Washington, D. C. 20402. Its ever-changing list of publications includes many on child care.

PARENTS AS RESOURCE cole*haas*heller*weinberger

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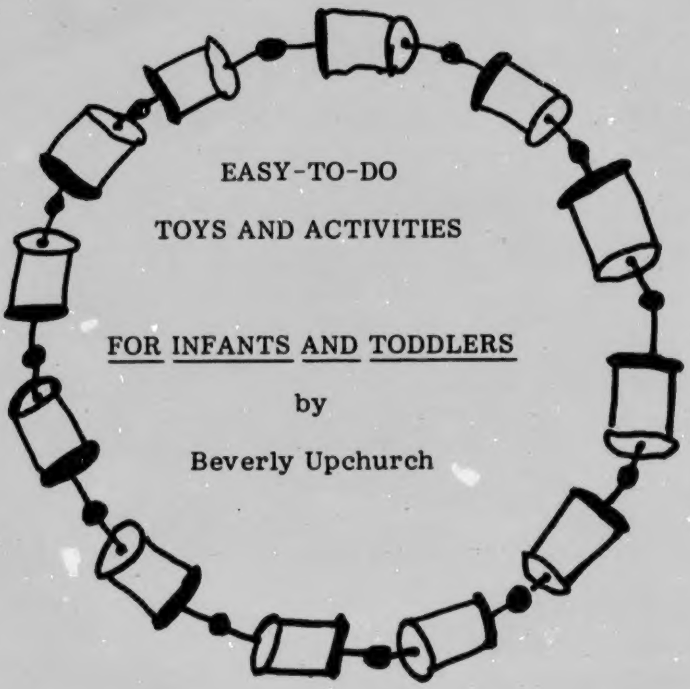


# EASY-TO-DO

# TOYS AND ACTIVITIES

# FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

by

Beverly Upchurch

Infant Care Project
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

# SOME THOUGHTS ON HOMEMADE TOYS

Most adults can recall that many of their favorite toys in childhood were "homemade" ones. This booklet is all about easy-to-do toys and activities for very young children. Our adult readers will enjoy following some of the suggestions in these pages, and any toddler who is around will love seeing the toys take shape right before his shining eyes.

Some points to remember about homemade toys are these:

1. Homemade toys take time to make--sometimes so much time as to be impractical.
2. Homemade toys are not very durable, but they can sometimes be made to last longer if they are covered with contact paper or painted.
3. It is fun to create toys and to see children use and enjoy them.
4. When grown-ups make toys for children they are setting a pattern that helps children to become inventive and resourceful when they grow up.

## TOYS FOR THE LITTLEST ONES (2 to 8 Months)

- Rattles and Shakers
- Foam Blocks and Shapes
- Spool Beads and Dolls
- Mirrors
- Paper Plate Foil Mirrors
- Cribmobiles
- Sock Mittens
- Bean Bags
- Simple-to-sew Rag Dolls and Animals

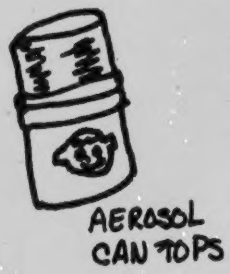
On the following pages you will find more detailed instructions for making some of the toys above.

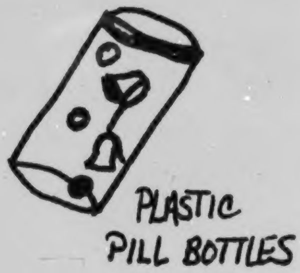
## ACTIVITIES FOR THE LITTLEST ONES

Did you know babies love:

- putting their hands in paper cups
- putting their hands in empty kleenex boxes
- the sound and vibrations of squeeze toys being squeezed against their tummies and faces
- crawling over an adult caregiver who is sitting on the floor
- seeing and hearing clapping sounds
- listening to music

## RATTLES AND SHAKERS





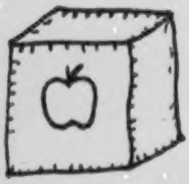
Needed:

- Small plastic pill bottles
- Aerosol can tops
- Vienna Sausage cans
- Permanent weatherproof glue
- Bells, beads, gravel, small bits of styrofoam packing, etc.

Rattles are easily made by putting objects such as bells and beads in a variety of sizes and shapes of bottles. Small clear plastic pill bottles are popular for making "holdable" see-through rattles for babies.

Other rattles and shakers can be made from such containers as empty aerosol can lids, vienna sausage cans, empty plastic playing card boxes, or the lids from timmy tummy cups. Just glue the lids or cans together with a strong glue (Goodyear's Pilo Bond Super Glue is good for this purpose, while a regular white glue is not strong enough.) Then, after the glue has dried, tape around the lids several times with colorful plastic tape. To make the rattles even more interesting, you can paint faces or colorful pictures on the outside of the cans, lids, or bottles.

## TOYS FOR THE LITTLEST ONES (2 to 8 Months)

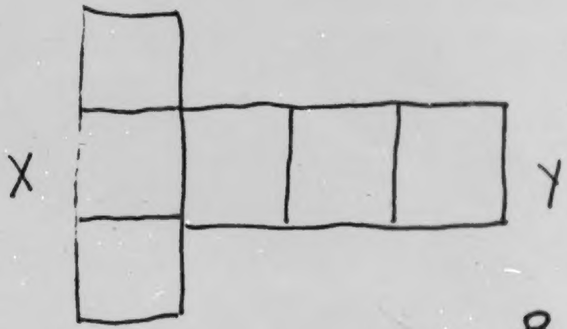


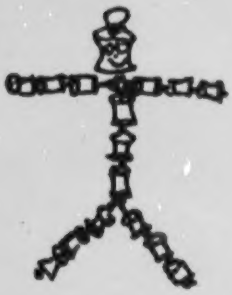
### FOAM BLOCKS AND SHAPES

Needed:

- 6-4" square pieces of colored felt
- Needle
- Thread
- Foam, cotton, or kapok, or old hosiery, for stuffing
- Scissors

Machine or hand stitch blocks as shown. Form square by sewing sides x and y together, and then sew all but one side of the block. Stuff the block with foam, cotton or kapok or old hose that have been cut into small strips. Pack the block tightly and then hand stitch the open end of the block. To decorate the block, glue or sew on felt pieces of contrasting colors that are cut into shapes: flowers, letters, numbers, etc. onto the blocks.





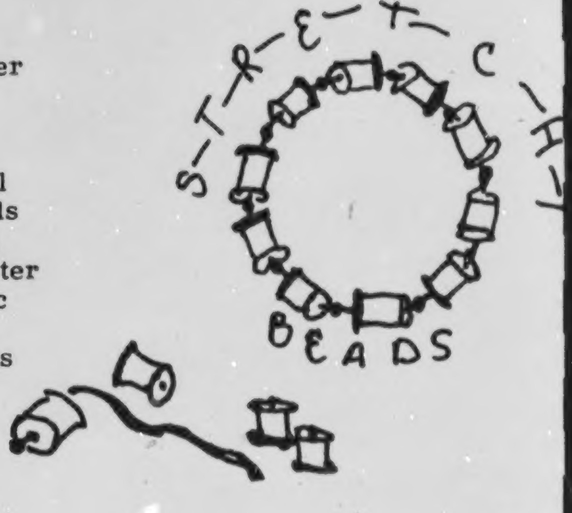
### SPOOL BEADS AND DOLLS

Needed:

- 15 to 20 empty thread spools
- ¼"wide elastic cording
- 1 can aerosol spray enamel in a bright color

Just thread the elastic cord through 15 or more painted spools and tie the ends of the cord together in a double know to make a stretchable necklace for baby.

To make a spool doll, you will need a larger spool for the head and about ten or twelve smaller spools for the body, arms, and legs. You will also need to tie two cross pieces of elastic onto a longer center piece of elastic for the arms and legs. The elastic cord should be knotted between each spool and it should have double knots on each end spool. This makes a nice doll to hang over an infant's crib.

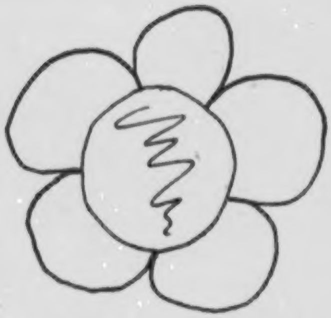


Infants and older toddlers will enjoy playing with these spool toys. Older toddlers may also enjoy stringing spools on shoestrings.

## MIRRORS FOR BABIES

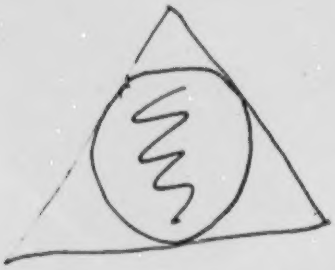
Needed:

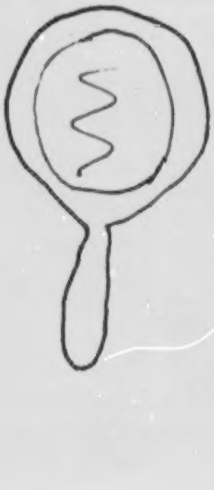
- 1 Small unbreakable wide-angle car mirror
- 8" Cardboard or plywood square
- Razor blade cutter
- Permanent weather-proof glue
- Contact paper

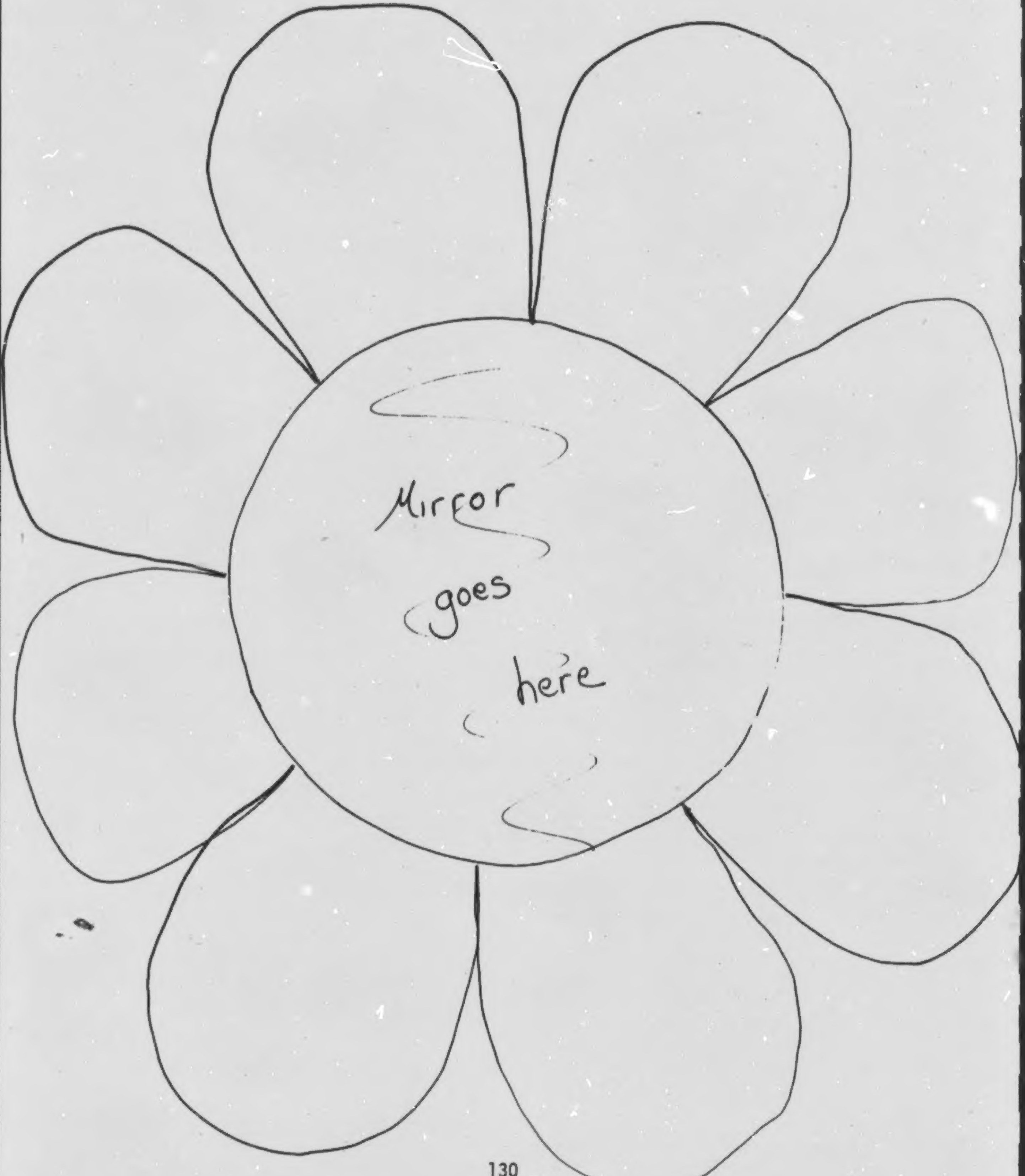


A nice and safe mirror for infants is a small unbreakable wide-angle car mirror. Such mirrors may be purchased for about one dollar in automotive departments of hardware or department stores. The mirrors can be used alone for the baby to hold in his hand or they may be glued to the crib or a similar hard surface.

A more decorative mirror can be made by mounting one of these mirrors onto a pretty shape which has been cut from a piece of cardboard or plywood. A flower is a nice shape for this (see actual size pattern on next page). It can be cut from 8" cardboard square with a razor blade cutter or a small electric handsaw. To make the shape more colorful and durable, cover it with an interesting and gay piece of contact paper.



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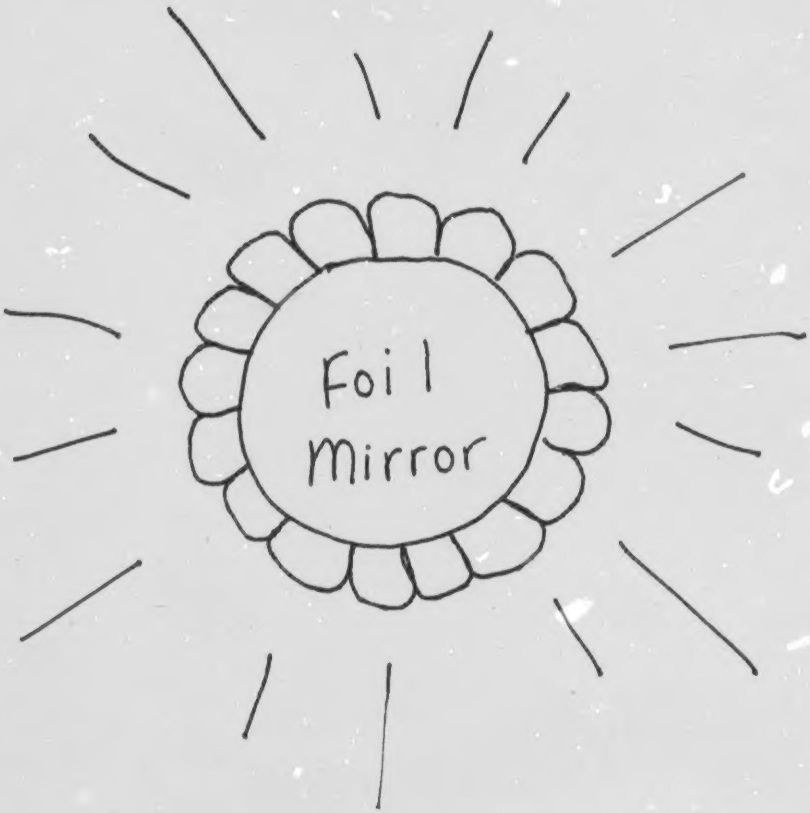
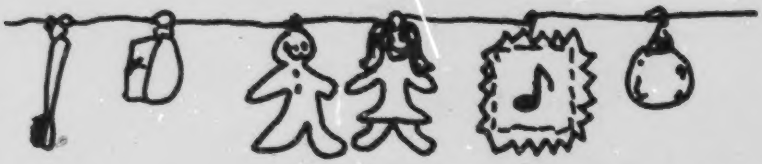
## PAPER PLATE FOIL MIRROR

Needed:

- 2 Heavy weight paper plates
- Heavy Duty aluminum foil
- Glue
- Transparent tape

Glue an 8-inch circular piece of aluminum foil to the center front of a paper plate. Then take a matching paper plate and cut a 7-inch circle from the middle of the plate. Now, glue and tape the rims of the plates together.





## CRIB MOBILE

Needed:

42" Heavy cord or rope
5 to 10 Small Christmas bells
5 or 6 Clothespins
4 to 6 Swatches of colorful or textured fabric
Assortment of safe household articles such as measuring cups, measuring spoons, jar lids, toothbrushes, etc.

For an interesting crib mobile that can be varied each week, tie the heavy cord across the rails of the crib and tie or hang (with clothespins) some of the following articles:

Measuring spoons and cups

Tooth brushes

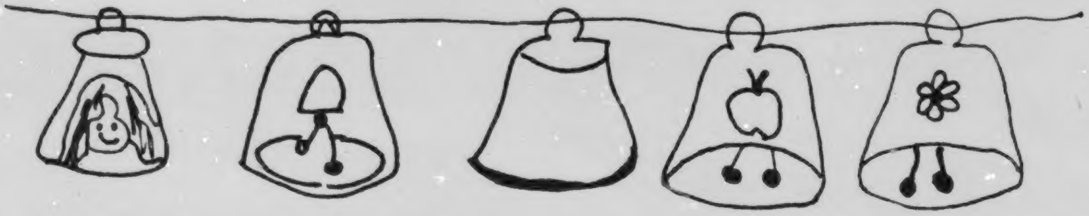
Pretty match boxes

Small safe toys (rattle, small car, airplane)

Paper dolls

Pictures

Bags made of interesting textured fabrics which have small bells, small jar lids, or other noisy objects sewn inside.



## BELL MOBILE

Needed:

- 42" Heavy cord or ribbon
- 5 inexpensive opaque plastic cups
- 4 Small jingle bells
- 1 Large Needle
- Heavy weight transparent fishing line

An inexpensive musical toy can be made by punching two holes in the bottom of five plastic cups and threading the jingle bells with short pieces of fishing line. Tie the cups onto a cord at regular intervals and attach them to the rails of the crib.

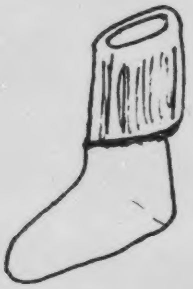
The cups may be decorated with printed contact paper or paper cutouts covered with clear contact paper.

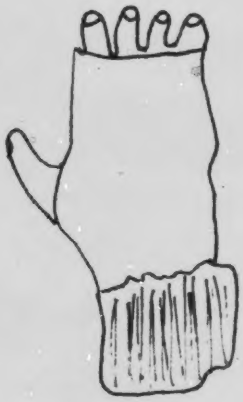
## SOCK MITTENS

Needed:

- 2 Brightly colored infant socks
- Scissors
- Needle and thread

A baby can practice finding his hands after someone puts a small brightly colored sock over each hand. For best results, cut a small slit for the thumb in the heel of the sock, and cut off the toe portion of the sock for the fingers. Hem the cut edges and slip babies' thumb and fingers into the appropriate openings.





## TOYS FOR THE HIGH CHAIR AGE (8 to 16 Months)

- Musical Roller Toy
- Turntable of Pictures
- Match Box Picture Push
- Sealed Plastic Bottles of Colored Water
- Coffee Can Drums
- Large Empty Boxes
- Many of the toys mentioned for the littlest ones

## ACTIVITIES FOR THE HIGH CHAIR AGE

Remember these favortie toddler games:

The Peek-A-Boo Game

The Pat-A-Cake

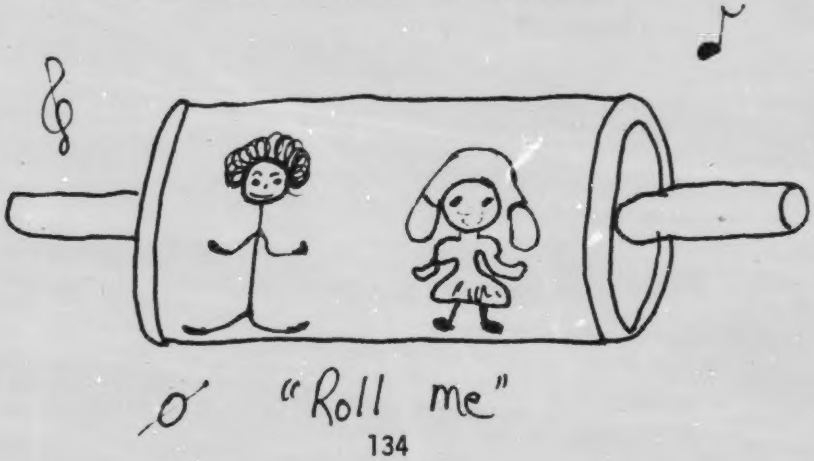
The Bye-Bye Routine

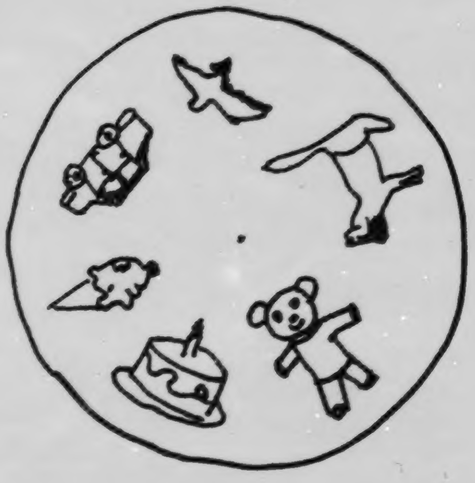
## MUSICAL ROLLER TOY

Needed:

- 3 Gallon ice cream container and lid
- 18" tube
- Scissors
- Bells
- Glue
- Magazine Pictures
- 1 Yard clear contact paper

To make this roller toy, cut a small hole in each end of the ice cream container. The holes should be the diameter of your 18" tube which will be inserted through the holes. Before inserting the tube, however, put inside a few bells, jar lids, or materials for sound effects. Now you are ready to glue pretty pictures all around the body of the container and then to cover it with clear contact paper.





## TURNTABLE OF PICTURES

Needed:

Small kitchen-aid turntable
Magazine pictures
Glue
Clear contact paper

Just glue simple, colorful pictures around the top of the turntable and cover it with clear contact paper to make this toy last longer.

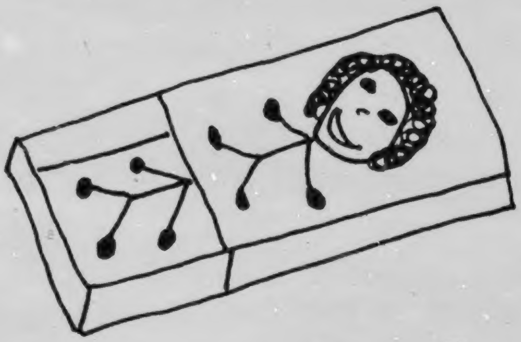
This is a toy that can be used to help the toddler learn to name simple objects, animals, birds, foods, etc. It has added interest for the child because the pictures "move."

## MATCH BOX PICTURE PUSH

Needed:

- Match box
- Small magazine picture
- Glue

The little ones enjoy pushing the drawers in and out of match boxes. To make the match box more interesting, glue pretty pictures inside as well as on the outside of



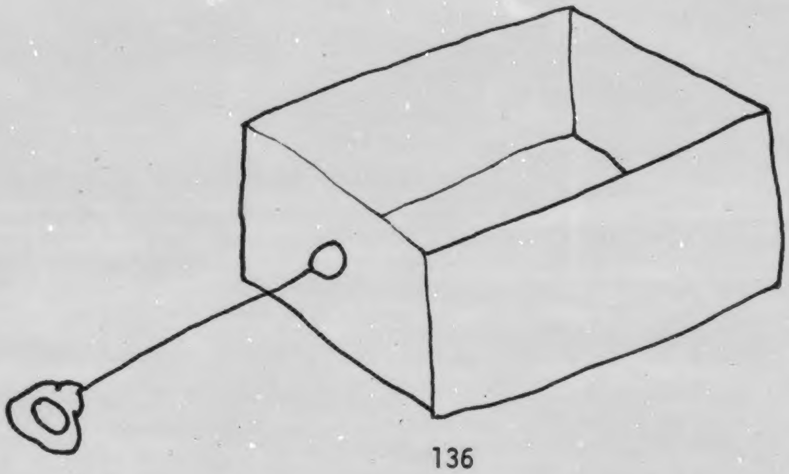
## SHOEBOX PULLTOY

Needed:

- Shoebox
- 24" cord
- Contact paper
- Scissors

Fasten sturdy cord through one end of a shoe box and knot the cord on each side of the hole through which the cord has been threaded. For durability, cover the box in a colorful contact paper.

Small cardboard cartons may also be made into pull toys that are used as wagons.



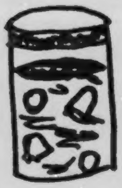
## SEALED PLASTIC BOTTLES OF COLORED WATER

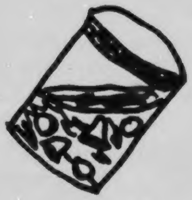
Needed:

- Clear plastic bottles
- Food coloring
- Bells, plastic beads
- Permanent waterproof glue
- Tape

Fill a plastic bottle with water that has been tinted prettily with food coloring. For added interest, put bells or plastic beads in the container. Now glue the lid onto the bottle. After the glue has dried, tape around the lid two or three times to secure it firmly.

Small children enjoy turning these bottles up and down, looking at the light through the bottle, shaking them to "make bubbles" inside, and so on.





## TOYS FOR THE TODDLER TO TWO-YEAR-OLD (16 to 24 Months)

Cloth Books
Doodad Trays
Cardboard Box or Dishpan TV
Stacking and Nesting Cans
Cardboard Box Playhouse or Think Tank
Stick Horses
Puppets
Foam Felt Funny Face Game
Sand Pails and Buckets
Flying Saucers and Birds on a String
Oatmeal Box Cradle

## ACTIVITIES FOR THE TODDLER TO TWO-YEAR-OLD

Pretend grocery shopping
Blowing and catching bubbles
Painting with paint brushes and water outdoors
Simple singing games
Flying paper airplanes, flying saucers, birds, and kites on strings
Dancing with gauzy scarfs
Providing the action as records are played

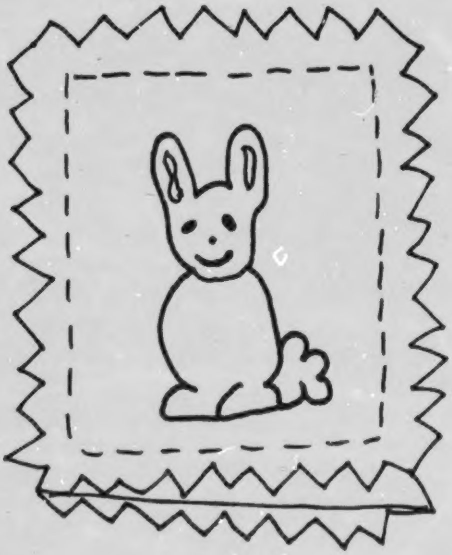
## CLOTH PICTURE BOOK

Needed:

- 6 to 8" squares of heavy cloth
- Cut-outs of primary shapes, familiar animals, flowers
- Needle and thread
- Pinking shears
- Glue

Let your imagination take over to make a delightful textured picture book for a child. Felt or some other heavy fabric may be used for each page, or the book can be made using different textured fabrics such as velvet, corduroy, polyester knit, taffeta, etc. for each page. On each page sew or glue a picture cut-out in a contrasting color or fabric. Vary the book by giving a bunny cut-out a tail of "real" cotton, ribbons and yarn for hair, or by giving a bird a tail of real feathers.

Children especially enjoy "do it" books which have a zipper page, a button or snap-it page, a page with a glove sewn on, or a mitten, or a sock, etc.



## DOODAD TRAYS

Needed:

- Discarded plastic plate or tray
- 3 or 4 Small plastic cups
- Permanent waterproof glue
- Small toys and household doodads (measuring spoons, thread spools, pieces of yarn, jar lids, etc.)

Glue plastic cups to the plate or tray. Fill cups with small toys and household doodads. To prevent small toys being scattered everywhere, an adult may sit with the child while he enjoys taking the doodads out of the cups and dropping them back inside again.

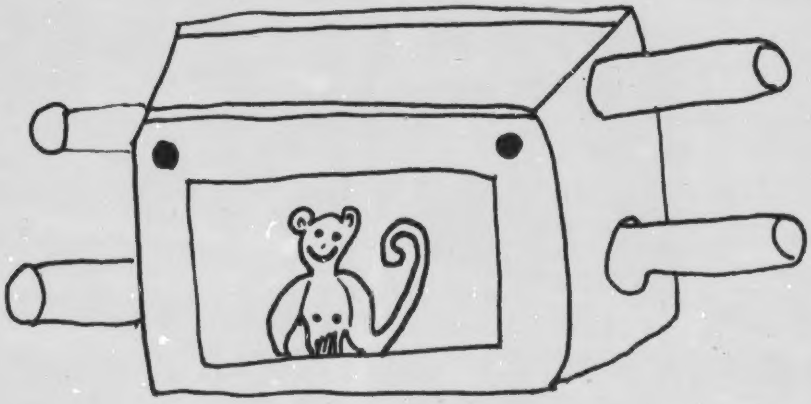
## ROLLER TV

Needed:

- Plastic dishpan or cardboard box
- Two tubes or broomstick handles cut several inches longer than the box is long
- Razor blade cutter or sharp knife
- Scissors
- Glue
- Tape
- Roll of meat wrapping paper

To make your TV-viewing window, cut a rectangular hole out of the bottom of a dishpan or a cardboard box. Then cut two holes inot which the roller tubes fit tightly, on each side of the dishpan.

To make your TV program, glue magazine pictures onto the roll of meat wrapping paper. Insert rollers in TV set and tape the ends of the roll of paper onto the two tubes. Now you're ready for the next program!

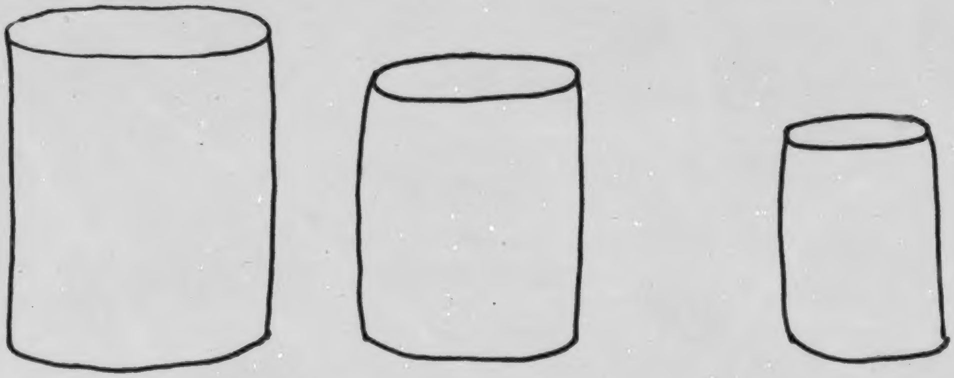


## STACKING OR NESTING CANS

Needed:

- Empty food tins of varying sizes
- Contact paper (or paint)

Collect food cans that are of varying sizes until you have a collection of four or five that will fit neatly inside each other. Be sure the top rims are smooth to protect small fingers from sharp edges. Cover the tins with bright contact paper or paint them for added attractiveness and durability.



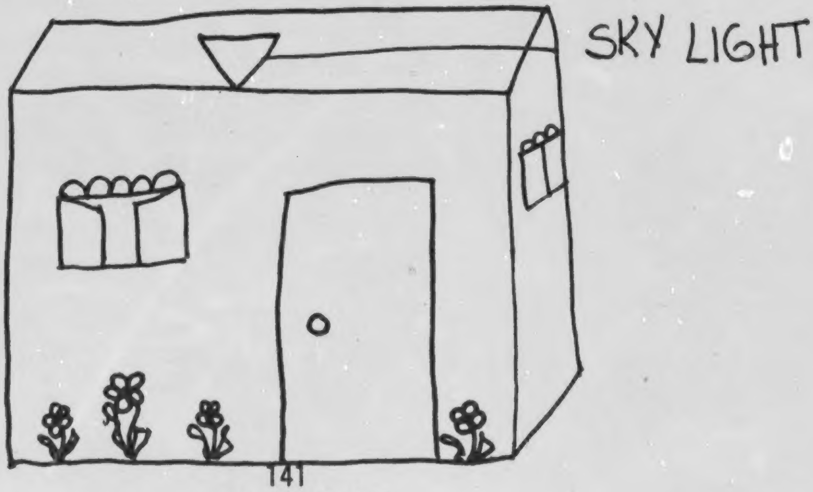
## PLAY HOUSE OR "THINK TANK"

Needed:

- Large appliance box
- Contact paper
- Magazine pictures
- Glue
- Scissors
- Razor blade cutter

A playhouse can be made by covering a large appliance box with contact paper and cutting holes for a door and a window.

The playhouse can double as a "THINK TANK". Place a small chair or stool inside the house. Glue interesting pictures to the inside walls and ceiling of the box.



## STICK HORSE

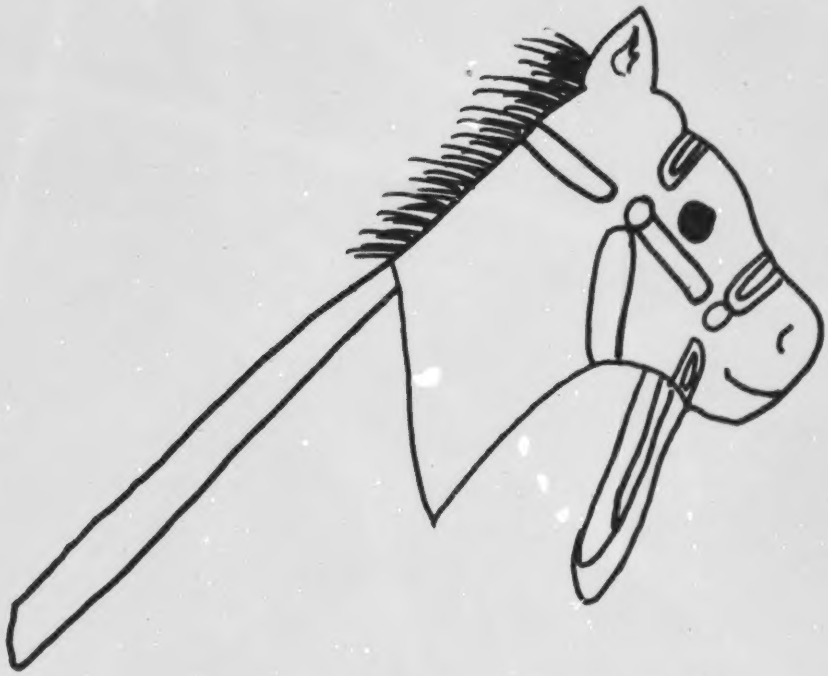
Needed:

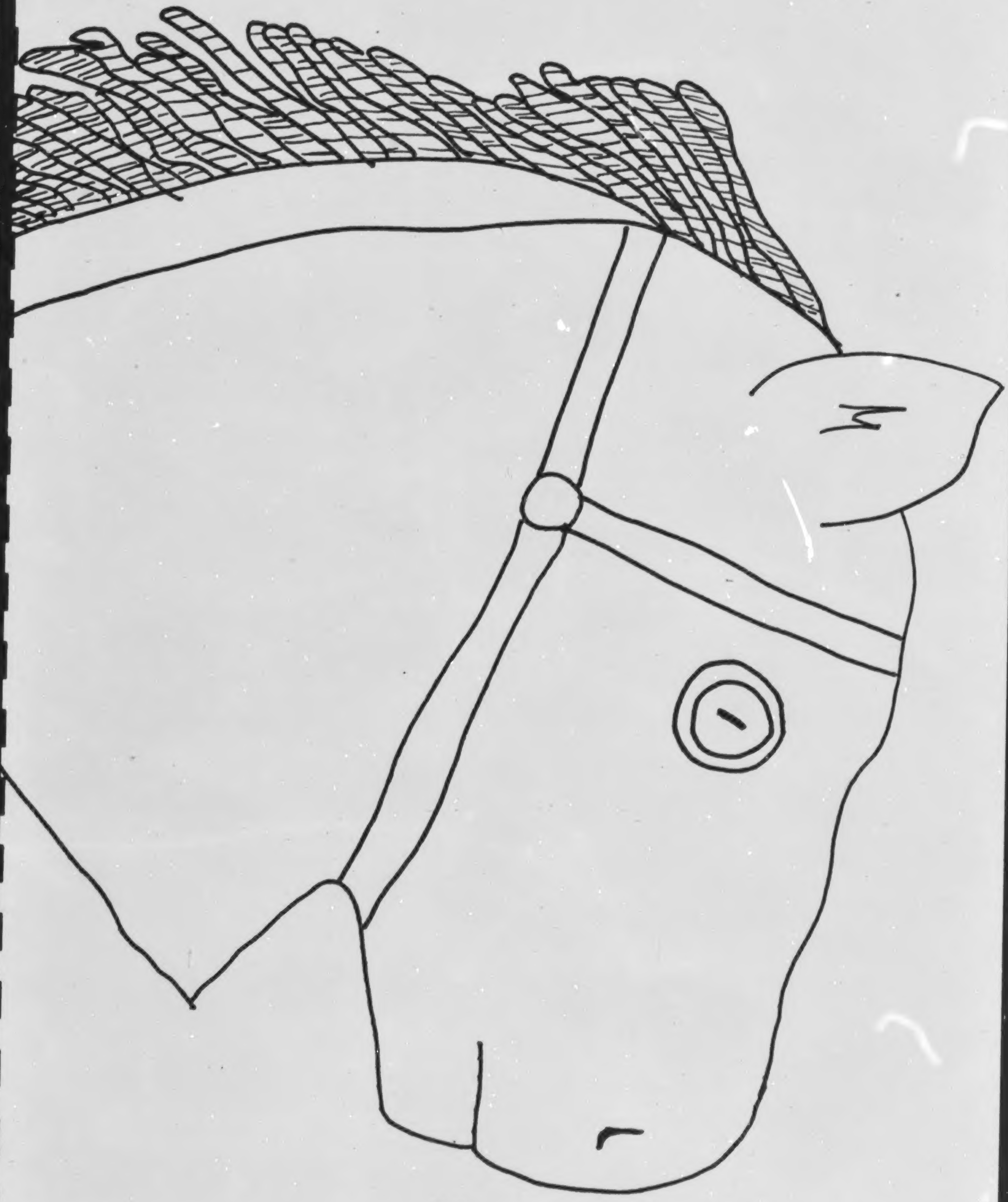
2 - 9" squares of heavy fabric
1 Broomstick handle
2 Bells or buttons
Yarn
Stuffing

Cut horse head by pattern (see next page) and sew outer edges together except for the bottom. Stuff with cotton, foam, or hose that have been cut into small pieces.

Insert broomstick inside along mane side of head and secure by stitching with heavy duty thread around the broomstick and side of the horse head.

Use buttons for eyes, felt cut-outs for mouth and nose, and yarn for the mane.





## FOAM-FELT FUNNY-FACE GAME

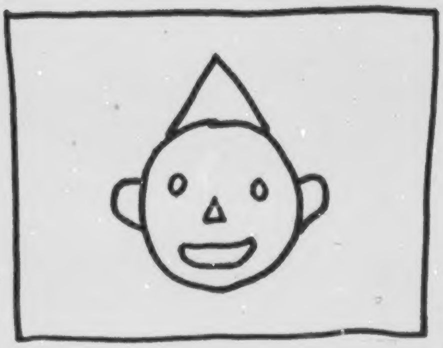
Needed:

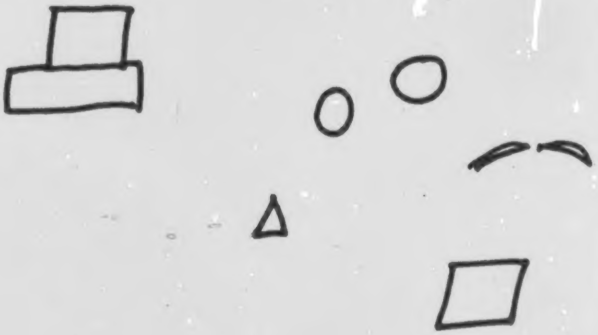
- Rubber foam
- Cardboard square or box lid
- Several pieces of colored felt
- Magic marker
- Scissors

Glue a piece of thin foam into the lid of a box or onto a square of heavy cardboard. Draw a large circle on the foam with a Magic Marker for the outline of the face. Then make felt cut-outs in different colored shapes for the eyes, nose, mouths, hats, etc.

The adult can show children how to make pictures or designs on the foam board with the shapes, or she can use it to help tell a story.

This toy can be made from free scrap foam found in packing cases.



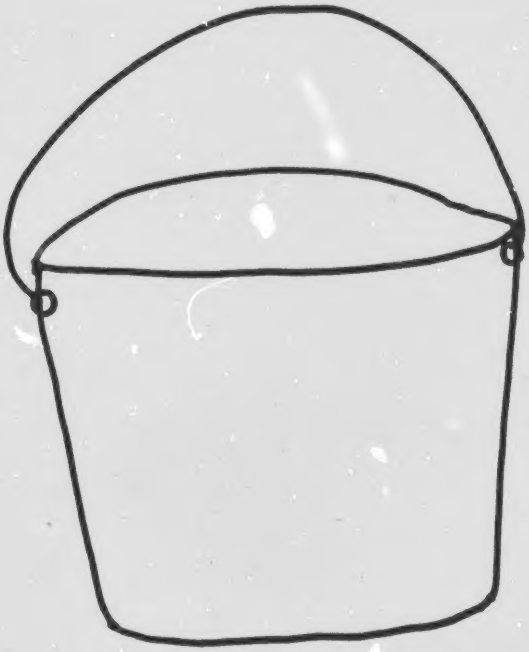


## SAND PAILS AND BUCKETS

Needed:

- Empty plastic food container
- Razor blade cutter or knife
- 12" Rope or heavy cord
- Ice pick

Punch two holes in opposite sides of an empty plastic food container. Insert the rope or cord into the holes and knot on the inside. Now, you have an easy-to-make non-rusting pail for sand play and for carrying or storing small treasures.

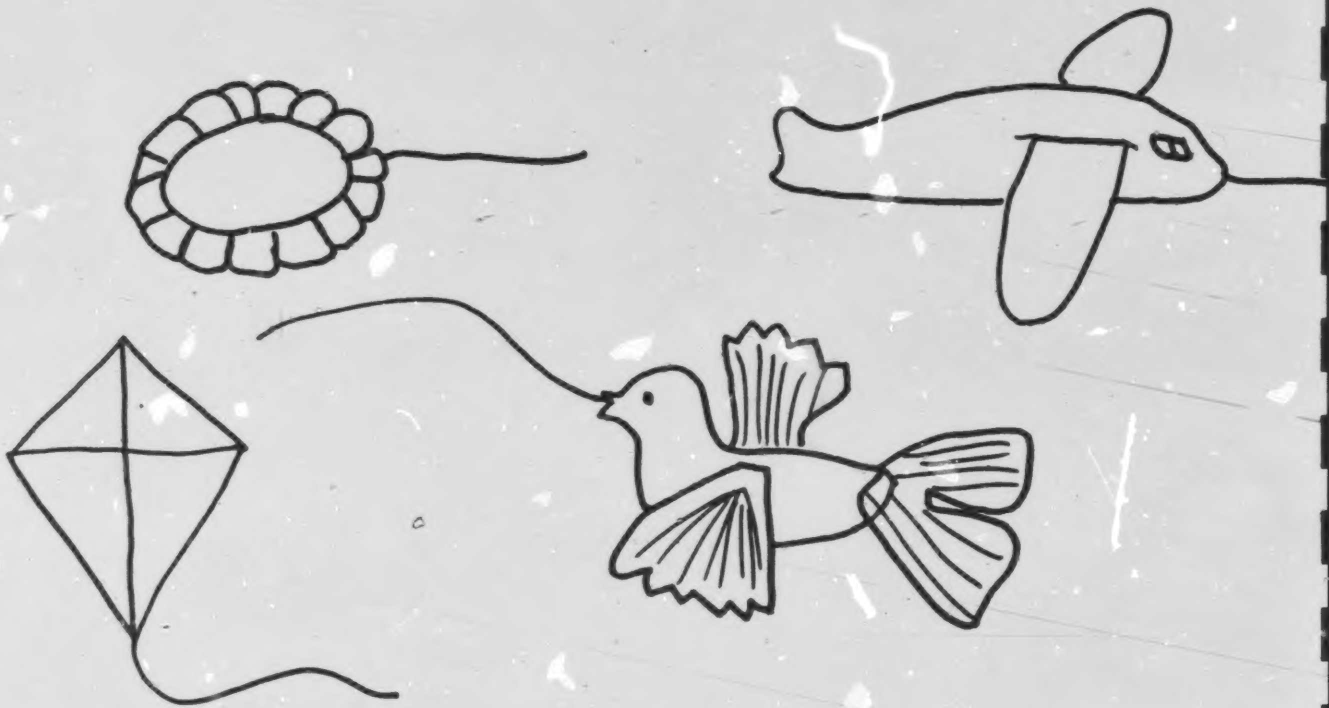


## PAPER AIRPLANES, FLYING SAUCERS, KITES AND BIRDS ON A STRING

Needed:

- Construction paper
- Paper plates (for flying saucers)
- 20" pieces of yarn
- Scissors
- Tape
- Staples

Cut body and wings of airplanes, birds, and kites from construction paper. Insert wings in airplanes and birds through slits cut in the bodies and tape into position. Staple a piece of yarn to the end of your flying toy. When the child runs with it outdoo his individual bird, airplane, kits or saucer will "fly".

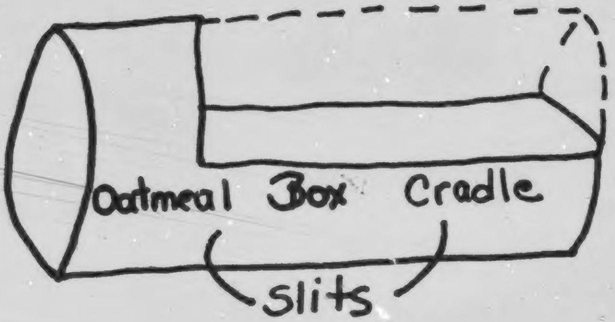


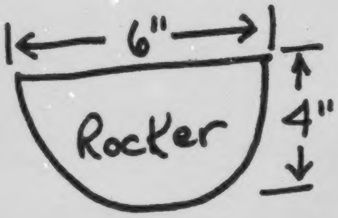
## OATMEAL BOX CRADLE

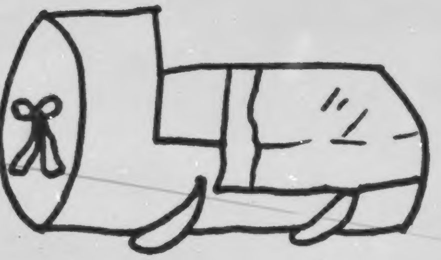
Needed:

- Oatmeal box
- 2 - 6" squares of lightweight cardboard
- Scissors
- Contact paper or paint

Cut side of an oatmeal box as this diagram indicates. Then cut two rockers from cardboard and insert them in the slits at the bottom of the cradle. Paint or cover the cradle in contact paper. And now, place a tiny doll in cradle and cover her with a handkerchief blanket.







## RECORDS FOR TODDLERS

| RECORDS | RECORDING COMPANY |
|---|---|
| Where are your Eyes? (2-A) | Pram Records |
| Big and Little (2-B) | Pram Records |
| Nice (1-A) | Pram Records |
| What Does Baby See? (4-A) | Pram Records |
| Clap Hands (5-A) | Pram Records |
| Up, Up, Up (5-B) | Pram Records |
| Peek-a-Boo | Pram Records |
| Baby's Bath | Pram Records |
| Sunday in the Park | Children's Record Guild |
| Jump Back, Little Toad | Children's Record Guild |
| Whoa Little Horses, Lie Down | Young People's Records |
| I'm Dressing Myself | Young People's Records |
| The Sleepy Family | Young People's Records |
| When the Sun Shines | Young People's Records |
| Let's Play Zoo | Young People's Records |
| Counting Games and Rhythms for Little Ones (FC-7056) | Folkway Records |
| Children's Songs (FC-7036) | Folkway Records |
| Rhythm Games and Songs by Ella Jenkins (FC-7057) | Folkway Records |
| American Folk Songs for Children by Pete Seegers | Folkway Records |

## ACTION SONGS AND FINGER RHYMES FOR TODDLERS

### RING AROUND THE ROSIE

Ring around the rosie
A pocket full of posies
Downstairs, Upstairs,
SQUAT!

### LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN

London Bridge is falling down,
falling down, falling down
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair lady.

### POP GOES THE WEASEL

All around the cobbler's bench
The monkey chased the weasel
That's the way the monkey goes
POP goes the weasel

## THIS IS THE WAY WE WASH OUR CLOTHES

(Tune: Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush)
This is the way we wash our clothes,
wash our clothes, wash our clothes
This is the way we wash our clothes
Early Monday Morning.

This is the way we iron our clothes,
iron our clothes, iron our clothes
This is the way we iron our clothes
Early Tuesday morning.

This is the way we sweep our floor,
sweep our floor, sweep our floor
This is the way we sweep our floor
Early Wednesday morning.

Note: This song is fun to vary by substituting other familiar activities for the main verse such as: This is the way we take a walk--or this is the way we drive a car--or this is the way we rock a baby--and any other verses you would like to sing to this old familiar tune.

## THE WHEELS ON THE BUS

(Tune: Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush)
The wheels on the bus go round and round,
round and round, round and round
The wheels on the bus go round and round,
all through the town.

The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep
beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep
The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep
all through the town.

The baby on the bus goes wah, wah, wah, etc.

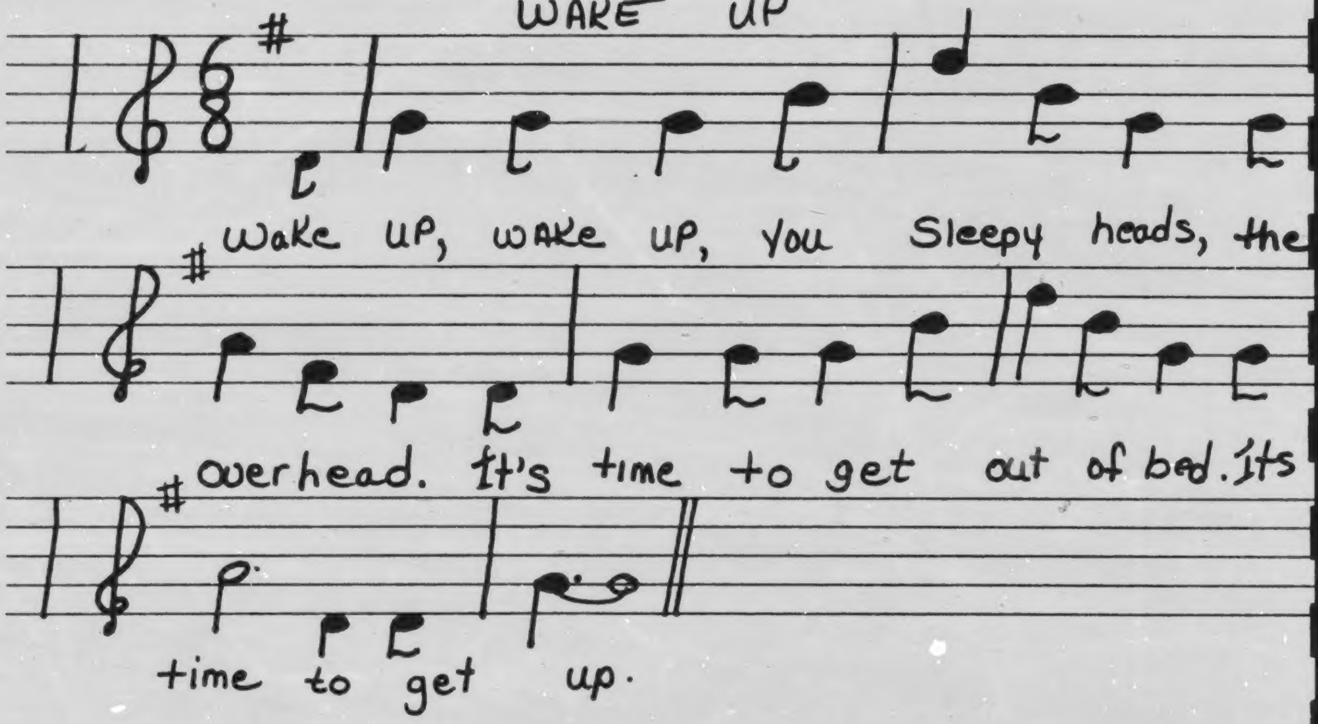
The people on the bus go up and down, up and down, etc.

The money on the bus goes ding-a-ling, etc.

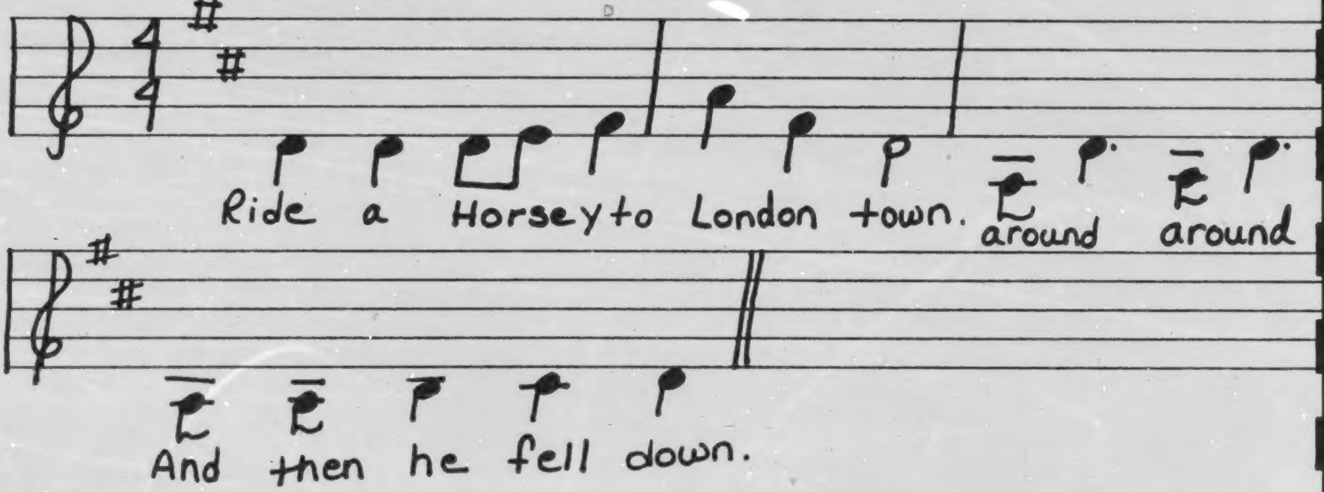
The driver on the bus says, "Move on back," etc.

The dog on the bus goes "woof," "woof," "woof," etc.

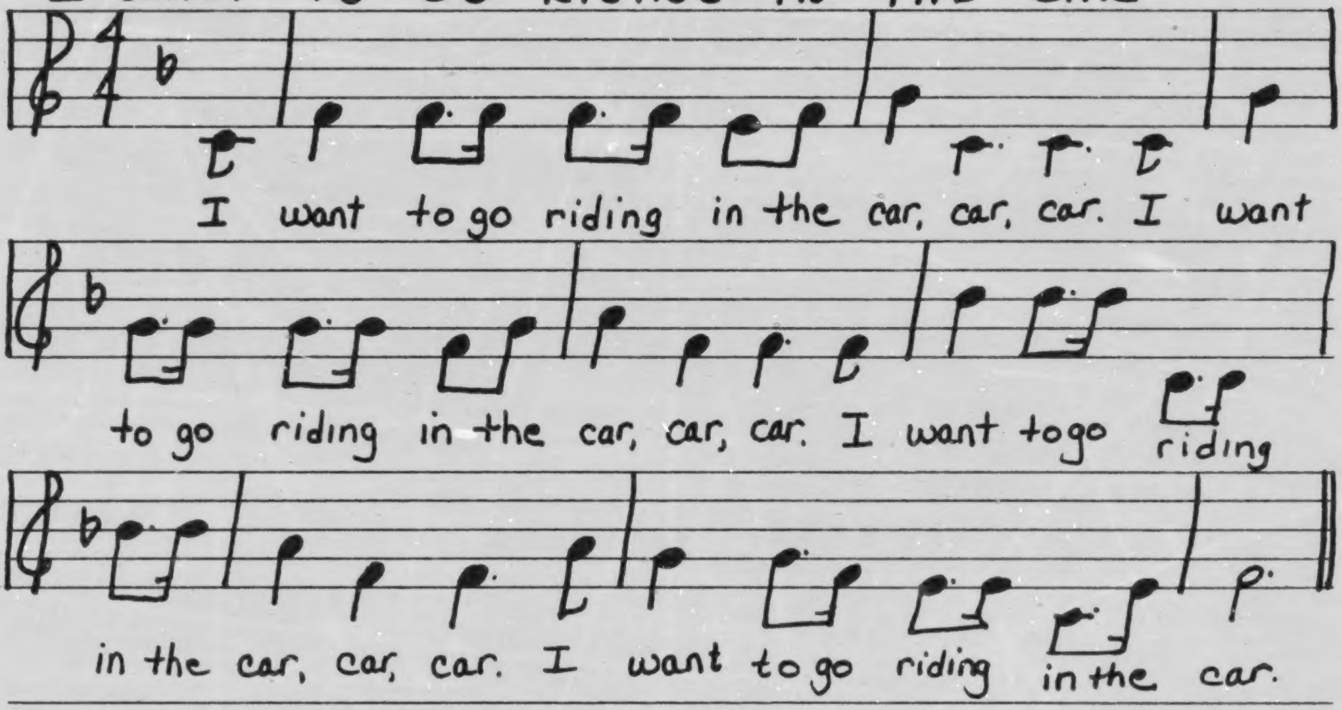
## WAKE UP


Wake up, wake up, you Sleepy heads, the
overhead. It's time to get out of bed. It's
time to get up.

## RIDE A HORSEY


Ride a Horsey to London town. around around
And then he fell down.

# I WANT TO GO RIDING IN THE CAR


I want to go riding in the car, car, car. I want
to go riding in the car, car, car. I want to go riding
in the car, car, car. I want to go riding in the car.

Second verse: Mary wants to ride in the front seat
Johnny wants to ride in the back seat

Janie wants to ride in the front seat
We all want to ride in the car.

Note: At the end of each verse make a car motor sound for the children by making a vibrating noise through your lips. Small children like to learn making this funny noise.

### THIS LITTLE PIGGY

This little piggy went to market,
This little piggy stayed home,
This little piggy had roast beef,
This little piggy had none,
This little piggy cried, "Wee, wee, wee"
All the way home.

### PAT-A-CAKE

Pat-a-cake, Pat-a-cake,
    Baker's Man
Bake me a cake as fast as you can.
Stir him up,
Roll him up,
Put him in the pan.

### TEN LITTLE MONKEYS

There were ten little monkeys jumping on the bed
    One fell off and broke his head
They called for the doctor, and the doctor said,
"That's what you get for jumping on the bed."

Note: Use the Ten Little Monkeys finger rhyme with the two-year-olds and make up accompanying hand motions. Also, it is fun to change the volume and tone of your voice when you are reciting this finger rhyme. The children will enjoy jumping like little monkeys and pointing their fingers and saying, "That's what you get for jumping on the bed!"

Many of the favorite nursery rhymes for action plays are from Mother Goose. Some favorites for little children are: "Diddle, Diddle Dumpling, My Son John", "Little Miss Muffet", "Jack, Jump Over the Candlestick", "Ride-A-Cock Horse", etc.

## FAVORITE IDEAS FOR ALL THE LITTLE ONES

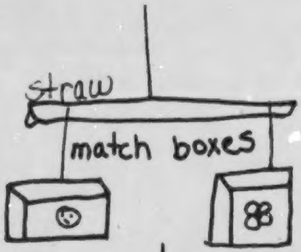
Mobiles for the Wind . . .

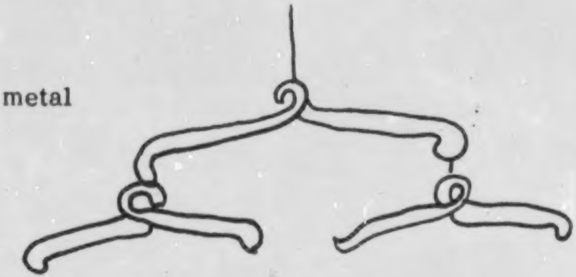
For Musical Sounds . . .

For Pretty Shapes . . .

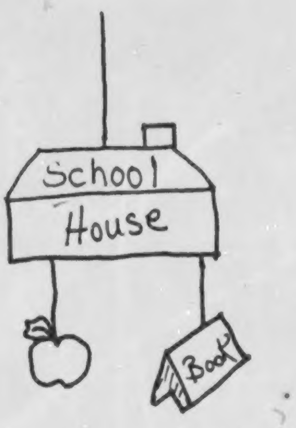
Mobiles that hang from the ceiling are lovely additions to nursery rooms. Always in motion, they are nevertheless soothing to watch as the baby drops off to sleep or the toddler waits to be fed.

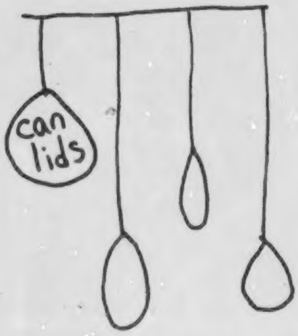
Some good materials to use are:





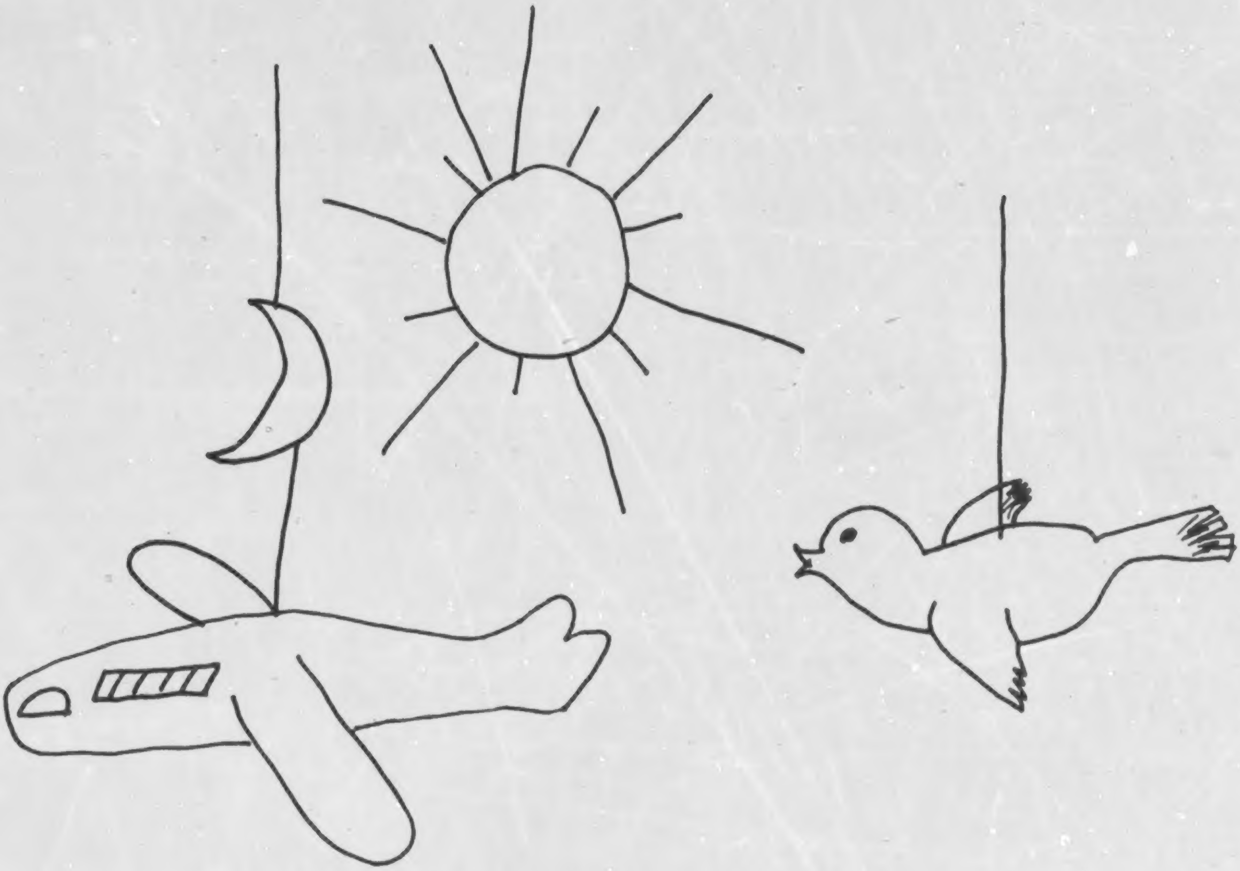
1. Clothes hangers, plastic metal or wood
2. Decorated match boxes
3. Colorful plastic shapes
4. Pictures glued on cardboard
5. Plastic straws, cut in various lengths
6. Decorated egg carton sections
7. Butterflies, birds, stars, etc. which have been cut from milk cartons and sprayed with glitter or covered with contact paper
8. Bells, lids from tin cans, wood rods, and other materials that make musical sounds
9. Transparent fish leader--20 pound weight (This is the best material to hand mobiles)





## FOR THOSE WHO LOVE MOBILES .......

If you are a person who can't live without mobiles, then you might follow the lead of this teacher. Hang many single strings of transparent fishing line from the ceiling or light fixtures. For each season of the year or for different holidays attach appropriate items to the strings. Some things you can hang are multicolored fall leaves, paper snowflakes. plastic icicles, small airplanes, or rockets, birds, the sun, moon, and stars . . .



## WALL DECORATIONS FOR FUN ......
## ...... FOR CONVERSATION ......

For the littlest ones to the toddlers simple decorations make the nursery walls cheerful and interesting. They are especially important after seven months of age when a baby is beginning to talk. Small children take notice of new wall decorations and enjoy having the caregiver hold them up to a new picture and talk about it. For the youngest children, uncomplicated pictures and cutout shapes are probably most effective. Although inexpensive prints in primary colors may be bought at stores or school supply houses, there are many types of homemade wall decorations that are equally or more effective.

### TYPES OF WALL DECORATIONS

1. Simple construction paper cutouts
2. Magazine pictures
3. Simple cutouts of foam rubber, painted with food coloring or other nontoxic paints
4. Multicolored felt cutouts sewn or stapled together
5. Flowers and caterpillars made from egg cartons and pipe cleaners
6. Flowers made from tissue paper
7. Paper place mats in attractive flower prints or stripes
8. Sheets of gift wrap paper in soft or bright colors

### SUBJECTS FOR WALL DECORATIONS ...

1. Pictures of babies and babies' possessions such as cup, spoon, shoes, cap
2. Familiar animals
3. Familiar flowers
4. Large graphic cutouts or pictures of children which clearly show the face and body
5. Seasonal and special subject decorations such as a large Christmas tree for Christmas, a carousel of circus animals, etc.
6. The child's own handprints and footprints

### TO REMEMBER ABOUT WALL DECORATIONS ...

1. Change the decorations every two weeks or as soon as the children's interest seems to lag.
2. Put some decorations on the wall beside each child's crib.
3. Put a decoration near the eating area.
4. Use wall decorations to suggest themes important to your room, such as children eating if you are just beginning to feed children at a table, or children sleeping if naptimes are problem, and so on.
5. Masking tape will hold up most wall decorations without damaging the paint; however, for hard-to-stick surfaces like cement and cinder block, strapping tape is preferable.

FOR THE ADULT . . .

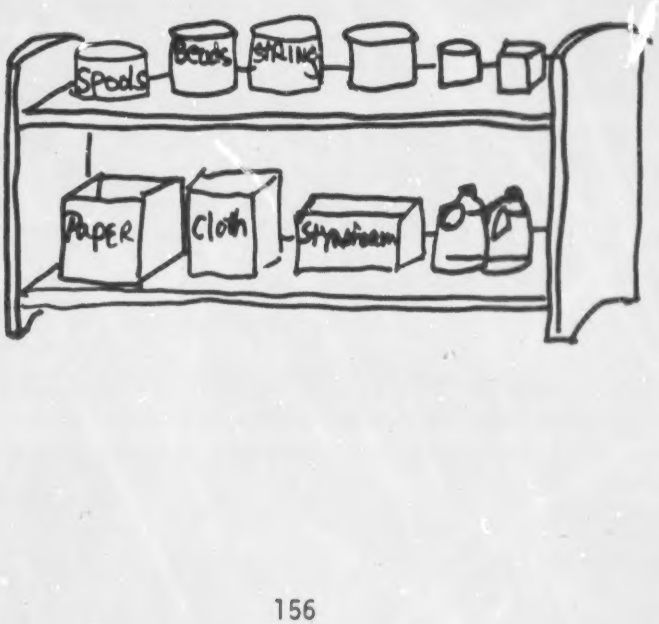
THINGS TO COLLECT . . .

Aerosol can tops
Beads--large ones
Boxes--card boxes, match boxes, shoe boxes, kleenex boxes
Buttons--big ones
Cans--coffee, fruit juice, soup, vienna sausage, etc.
Cartons--large appliance cartons, egg cartons, fruit shipping cartons
Clorox jugs--plastic containers for liquid soap, etc.
Cloth scraps--all textures, colors, designs
Corks
Feathers
Food containers--plastic, aluminum
Magazine pictures--post cards, prints, etc.
Oat meal and corn meal boxes
Paper cups, plastic tumblers
Papers--scraps of all kinds, gift wrap, contact paper, wall paper, construction papers
Plastic bottles--with screw tops, pill bottles, all sizes
Spools
String--yarn, ribbon
Styrofoam
Tubes
Wheels

AND WHEN YOU HAVE

A BIG BEAUTIFUL COLLECTION . . .

. . . a way to organize them



| THINGS TO BUY | WHERE TO BUY | APPROXIMATE COST |
|---|---|---|
| Pile Bond Super Glue by Goodyear | Variety or Discount Store | $ .69 tube |
| Strapping tape | Variety or Discount Store | .69 roll |
| Transparent tape | Variety or Discount Store | .39 roll |
| Transparent fishing leader (20 lb. weight) | Variety or Discount Store | .49 for 20 yds. |
| Polyethylene plastic tubes (Golf club protectors) | Variety or Discount Store | .19 each |
| Elastic cording | Variety or Discount Store | .39 for 3 yds |
| Plastic dishpan | Variety or Discount Store | .49 each |
| Kitchen Aid turntable | Variety or Discount Store | 1.29 each |
| Wide angle car mirror | Variety or Discount Store | 1.19 each |
| Contact paper | Variety or Discount Store | .39 each |
| Bells (Christmas bells) | Variety or Discount Store | .49 per doz. |
| Pipe cleaners | Variety or Discount Store | .19 pkg. |
| Spray paint | Variety or Discount Store | .98 per canister |
| Tin snips | Variety or Discount Store | 2.98 each |
| Razor blade cutter | Art Supply Store | 1.49 each |
| 3 qt. ice cream carton | Local dairy shipping dept. | .35 each |

# TEACHING YOUR CHILD DOs AND DON'Ts

Lanny E. Morreau

## INTRODUCTION

We all have our own ideas about how to raise children. There is no one "right way. What works with one child may not work with another.

But some things are true for almost all children.

CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN THEY ARE HAPPY.

CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN THEY CAN DO THINGS WELL.

CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN THEY KN[illegible]AT WE WANT.

CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN WE LET THEM KNOW WE LIKE WHAT THEY DO.

The methods talked about in this book are not new. Parents have been using them for many years. By using them, you can make learning easy and fun for your childr[illegible].

These are several things you should remember as you try them.

IT TAKES TIME.

NO ONE IS PERFECT.

ANYONE CAN DO IT.

CHILDREN ARE NOT "GOOD" OR "BAD."

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You are always teaching your child new things.

Each time you talk to him you are teaching him. Each time you play a game with him he is learning something.

Until he is three or four years old, he will learn almost everything from you or someone in your family.

## WHY DO IT?

The more your child can do when he goes to school, the better he will do in school.

If you read to him, he will want to read. If you play games with him, he will want to play school games.

If he draws on paper and you tell him how good it is, he will want to draw and write.

Your child will feel good about doing things you like. He will like them even more because you are doing them with him.

## YOUR CHILD

Even the smallest children are learning new things.

Your baby can learn just from being in your arms, or grabbing at your fingers, or hearing your voice.

He will do things over and over again if you laugh with him or hold him close each time he does something new.

If your child does something, and then something good happens, he will do the same thing again.

After your child learns to do one new thing, it will be easier for him to learn other things.

## PART I
## SEEING YOUR CHILD

### WHAT YOUR CHILD DOES

First you have to find out what your child does.

Some things you'll want him to do more often. Other things you'll want him to stop doing.

You should be able to say what your child does in a way that other people will know exactly what he does.

### WATCH YOUR CHILD

If you look at your child and he's doing something you like, walk over and say, "That's good." Or hold him close and play with him for a minute. He will do the thing you like more often.

### KNOW HOW OFTEN HE DOES IT

If you want your child to do something more often, you have to know how often he does it NOW.

You can't watch him all day. But, you can watch him closely during small parts of the day.

Pick a special time--a time when you are not too busy with other things around the house. Then, play with him, read to him, or just watch what he does.

Keep tract of how often he does something by counting it on a piece of paper.

PICK A SPECIAL TIME WHEN YOU WILL USUALLY BE ABLE TO DO THINGS WITH YOUR CHILD.

### IT WORKS BOTH WAYS

If your child is doing something that bothers you and you get angry, you feel something. But so does your child.

What you do makes your child feel good or bad. What your child does makes you feel good or bad. You feel better when your child does nice things. Children feel better when you do nice things.

REMEMBER: You have to let them know what you like.

## TELL YOUR CHILD WHAT YOU LIKE

There are many ways you can tell a child you like something. A child knows he is doing something you like when you hold him close after he has done it. He also learns that your smile means you like what he is doing.

You show babies what you like when you laugh with them or make the same sounds they are making.

With older children you can tell them you like something.

## A CHILD CAN TELL YOU WHAT HE LIKES

Your child will also tell you what he likes. When your baby laughs or smiles, he is showing you he likes what you do.

Older children may tell you what they want, or, you can tell by what they do. If they do something often, they like it.

If they are very happy when they do something, they like it. If they ask for something often, they like it.

## SOMETHING HE LIKES

Your child will do more new things if something he likes happens after he does them.

First, let the child know what you want.

Then, when he does it, make sure something happens that he likes.

## YOU ARE THE BEST THING HE HAS

Children like to hear happy sounds from their parents. They like to feel their parents holding them. They like to have their parents play with them. You don't need many other things to make children happy.

When you see your child doing something you like, let him know you like it. With small children and babies, laugh with them, hold them, and play with them.

Children also like it when their parents say nice things to them or about them.

## FINDING OTHER THINGS HE LIKES

When children are one or two years old, they like many things. They like to play more by themselves. They like pieces of candy. They like to go places. They have special games they like to play with their parents.

Watch for those things your child does often and for those things that make him very happy.

You can then draw pictures of the things he likes. After he does something you ask him to do, let him pick something he wants to do from the pictures.

## BE COOL--BE FAIR

You want your child to be fair and not to get mad at you--nobody wants to "fight" with his children. Teach him to be fair by being fair with him. If you are fair with him, he will probably be fair with others. If you don't get angry with him, he will show less anger with you.

Most people do not like to shout at children. Children do not like to be shouted at. If you keep cool, you may not have to hit or shout at your child.

## DON'T ADD EXTRAS

When you have agreed to do something with your child, you should always do it.

After he does what you have asked, you should let him do what you said he could do. You should not add extras.

## TELL YOUR CHILD THE RULES

Your child should know what you want. He should be told how you want him to act. He should be told what he can and cannot have. Children should not have to guess.

We all have rules for our homes. If children know them, they will be happier.

You should make rules for things that are true all the time.

## THREATS WEAR OUT--SO DO PROMISES

Don't say you're going to do something and then not do it.

Your child may do something you don't like. You may say, "If you do that again, you will go to your room." If it happens again and you don't send him to his room, he won't believe you the next time. He will keep doing it.

Your child may do something you like. You may say, "When you do this, we will play ball." If you don't play ball with him when he gets done, he won't believe you the next time. He may not do it.

If you say you will do something, always do it.

## ALWAYS DO WHAT YOU SAID YOU WOULD--BE FAIR

It's easy to forget what we say we'll do. Or, sometimes, things happen that make it hard to do. A child doesn't understand why we can't do it.

If you say something will happen, you should try to do it.

## DO NOT HIT--DO NOT HURT

Sometimes we all get angry. Our children get angry with us and we get angry with our children. Every family has its "hassles."

When children are hit, they hurt.

No one likes to be hurt. Sometimes children even do things we don't want more often because they are hurt.

If your child is hurt, he may not learn what you want him to. Children learn to do things that lead to something they enjoy.

## YOUR CHILD WILL DO NEW THINGS

Let's talk about what you've read so far.

Your child will learn new things each day. Even babies are learning. You can make your child happy while he learns.

You know how to find things your child likes.

You know that if something he likes happens after he does something, he will do it more often.

You know that if you hurt or hit your child he may not learn as well. He may even learn to do something you don't like more often.

## PART II
## HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN

### START WITH SOMETHING YOUR CHILD CAN DO

Your child will learn faster if you start with something easy.

Find something he can do. Then, help him do it better. When he can do it well, start on something new.

### TUNE YOUR CHILD IN

Always get your child "tuned in" before you start to teach him. A quiet place works best.

Help him by saying his name or talking to him first or playing with him at what he is doing before you begin.

Get your child "tuned in" to you before you start teaching him.

### TALK TO YOUR CHILD

The more you talk to your child the more he will learn.

You can help a baby learn by making the same sounds he makes. With small children, you can answer their questions and read to them.

Most important, listen when your child talks to you. Let him join in. We all learn by talking and listening.

### LEARNING CAN BE FUN--MAKE LEARNING A GAME

Children learn while playing. You can make up games to help your child learn.

Putting toys in a box to fill the lion's belly.
Putting dolls to bed or trucks in a garage at night.
Looking at magazines to find a picture of something you talk about.
Finding many things in the house of the same color.
Counting the number of grapes in a bowl and eating them.

Think of some games you could play with your child. Play them and help him learn.

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

You do not ask your child to walk before he can stand. You also do not ask your child to tell you what is in a picture until he can say words.

You must start your teaching with something your child will be able to do.

## START SMALL--MAKE SURE HE CAN DO IT

The first time you ask your child to do something you should ask for just a little bit. When he does it, let him do something he likes.

The next time you can ask for just a little more. It will not be long and he will be able to do it all.

Start with one small thing. Show him how to do it. Then, let him do something he likes each time he does one thing. He will soon be able to do it by himself.

## HELP HIM AT FIRST

If you want your child to do something new, you have to teach him how. You may have to help him at first. A baby does not learn to do new things by being told how to do them. He has to practice and you have to help.

You may have to help him the first time he does something, but soon he will be able to do it alone.

BEGIN WHERE YOUR CHILD IS. FIND OUT WHAT HE CAN DO. THEN TEACH HIM THE NEXT STEP.

## LET YOUR CHILD DO IT

You want to teach your child to do things by himself. Be careful not to help him too much.

You are helping him too much if you keep doing something he can do himself.

HELP YOUR CHILD UNTIL HE CAN DO THE REST.

Do everything the first time. The next time, do everything but the last part for him. Then, let him finish it himself. Praise him for what he does alone. Do less and less each time.

## TAKE ONE STEP AT A TIME

Don't go too fast. You have to take your time. Your child learns things in small steps.

Each time he does one new thing, let him know that you like what he did. You would not give a two-year-old a picture to color and then ask him to stay in the lines. Start by letting him scribble on a piece of paper--he is learning. Then, take his hand and show him how to make up and down lines. He can copy these by himself. Soon, he will learn to control the crayons and will draw alone. Children like to color with other people. They like to have someone say, "That is a good picture." And, you can really show your child that you like what he did by putting his drawing on the wall and showing it to other people while he is around.

## ALWAYS GIVE SOMETHING HE LIKES

When you are teaching your child something new, you should let him do something fun or show him that you like what he did.

At first, something good should happen each time he does it.

## ONCE IN A WHILE

After your child learns to do something well, you do not have to give him something he likes each time he does it. He will keep doing it if the thing he likes happens once in a while.

You should make sure you still let him know that you like it--but not as often. For example, every three or four times he does it.

Then start with something new. Each time he does the new thing, let him do something he likes.

You can ALWAYS tell him he did a nice job.

## WORKING TOGETHER--TELL THE CHILD WHAT YOU WANT

Your child is not good or bad. Sometimes you do not like what he does. You still like him. You should not say, "You are a bad boy," or "You are wrong."

Talk about what he did. Your child has to know what you do not like. He also has to know what you like.

Your child does things because something he likes happens after he does them.

If you tell your child what you like, he will do it if something he enjoys happens. If you tell your child what you do not like, he will not do it, if nothing he enjoys happens after he does it.

## TELL THE CHILD WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN IT IS DONE

Your child should know what will happen after he does something you like. When he does what you ask, always do what you said you would do.

Do not ask for too much. Make sure that something he enjoys happens.

Sometimes your child will do things you like without being asked to do them. Watch your child, "catch him being good," and tell him you like it.

## LOOK FOR SOMETHING GOOD AND TELL HIM ABOUT IT

Your child does many things you like. Even babies do things you want them to do. WATCH FOR THESE THINGS.

ALL CHILDREN DO "GOOD" THINGS. WATCH YOUR CHILD AND LET HIM KNOW WHEN HE DOES SOMETHING YOU LIKE.

## DON'T WORRY ABOUT LITTLE THINGS YOU DON'T LIKE

We all get "picky" with children. We see little things we don't like and we tell children about them--over and over and over again. No wonder children learn to "tune us out".

Don't worry about little things you don't like. Don't keep talking about them.

Show your child what you want. Show him how to change. Then, when he does it right, show him how much you like it. He will learn to do more things you like.

## PART III
## WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD

### DO NOT HIT--DO NOT HURT

Hitting your child doesn't teach him much. If he is hurt, he doesn't want to learn.

Your child is also hurt by things you say. You shouldn't call him names. You should try not to shout or scream at him.

If you tell him what you like, he will try to do it. If you show him what you like, he will try to do it.

When he does what you like, show him you like it. If something he likes happens after he does it, he will do it more often.

You don't have to hurt him. He will not want to hurt you. He will want to learn more.

### HE MIGHT FIGHT BACK

Children can fight back. They do when they are hurt. They may try to hurt us. They may say things we don't like. They may do more things we don't want them to do.

Then we would have to spank or hurt them again. They may keep doing the things we don't like. Soon we seem to be hitting them or shouting at them all the time. They are not happy. We are not happy.

### HE MAY STOP TRYING

When your child is hurt, he may not learn very much. He may stop trying to learn. He may seem to be "good." He may not want to talk to you. He may not want to play with you. He may not want to be around you because you have hurt him.

Doing things with you is how he learns. If he stays away from you, he won't learn as much. He may not want to try new things.

## SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO--YOU CAN'T LET HIM HURT HIMSELF OR OTHERS

Sometimes your child learns when he is hurt. If he is going to hurt himself, you may have to stop what he is doing by swatting him.

You can't let your child hurt himself or others. You should not let your child break things on purpose. You have to let him know that what he is doing is "wrong." If you want him to learn, you should always tell him why he has been hurt.

Never hit your child's face, chest, or stomach. Even shaking your child can hurt him very badly.

## DON'T PUNISH EVERYONE

You shouldn't punish all your children because one of them does something you don't like. You may be punishing the other children when they are doing something you want them to do. Then they will do it less often.

## DON'T OVERDO IT

If you punish your child, don't be too hard on him. Tell him why he is being punished. Tell him how long it will last.

We all get angry sometimes. When we're mad, we might punish too much. Try to be cool. Be fair. When we are angry, a spanking may turn into a beating.

Don't punish your child the first time he does something you don't like. We want him to learn. Telling him you don't like what he did may be enough. Tell him what will happen if he does it again.

Do only what you said you would do if he does it again. If it doesn't happen again tell your child how happy you are. Let him know that you like it when he doesn't do what you don't like.

## YOUR CHILD LEARNS BY MAKING IT RIGHT

Your child learns things by doing them. If your child does something "wrong," you can teach him how to do the right thing.

You don't have to hit him or shout at him. You can have him correct what he did that you didn't like.

If your child breaks something, he will learn more if he has to give up something of his own to take its place. If your child makes a mess, he will learn more if he has to clean it up.

## A TIME AWAY FROM GOOD THINGS

Tell your child what you do not like and what will happen if he doesn't stop doing it.

You should tell him how long he will have to stay away from something he likes to do. The time away from things he likes should be very short for a small child.

Tell your child why you are sending him to his room or sitting him in his chair. If you don't tell him, he won't learn.

Don't scare your child. You shouldn't put him in a dark room or a closet. If you scare him, you hurt him. Scaring him may be worse than hitting him.

REMEMBER: YOU SHOULD ALWAYS TELL YOUR CHILD WHAT YOU WANT. IF YOU DO TAKE SOMETHING AWAY, TELL HIM WHEN HE CAN GET IT BACK.

## FINDING SOMETHING ELSE HE CAN DO

If your child is busy doing something you like, he won't have time to do things you don't like.

If your child is doing something you don't like, look for something else he could be doing. When he does the new thing, show him you like it.

## A LOOK AT WHAT WE LEARNED

IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO DO SOMETHING MORE OFTEN, LET HIM DO SOMETHING HE ENJOYS AFTER HE DOES IT. FOLLOW THESE STEPS.

1. Think of what you want your child to do more often.
2. Count how often he does it now.
3. Find things your child likes.

   HE ASKS FOR THEM
   HE DOES THEM OFTEN
   HE SAYS HE LIKES THEM
   HE IS HAPPY WHEN HE DOES THEM

4. Tell your child what you want and what he can do after he does it.
5. After he does it, always do what you said you would do.
6. Count how often he does it. See if he does it more often.

IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW, FOLLOW THESE STEPS.

1. Start with something your child is ready to do.
2. Start with one small step.
3. Get your child's attention before you begin.
4. Tell him how to do it. Show him how to do it.
5. Next time, do everything for him but the last part. Let him finish it himself.
6. Help him at first. Talk to him and show him little steps if he needs help.
7. Let him do something he enjoys or show him you are happy each time he does one part right.
8. Do less and less each time.
9. When he can do it all well, start something new.

IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO DO SOMETHING LESS OFTEN, TAKE AWAY SOMETHING HE ENJOYS AFTER HE DOES IT. FOLLOW THESE STEPS.

1. Think about what you want your child to do less often.
2. Count how often he does it now.
3. Tell your child what you do not like and what will happen if he does it.

   HAVE HIM CORRECT IT.
   FIND SOMETHING ELSE HE CAN DO.
   TAKE HIM AWAY FROM SOMETHING HE LIKES.

4. If he does it, always do what you said you would do.

   REMEMBER: DO NOT HIT YOUR CHILD. CHILDREN WHO ARE HURT DO NOT LEARN AS WELL.

5. Count how often he does it. See if he does it less often.

As you teach your child, you should remember two things.

IT TAKES TIME--DON'T EXPECT TOO MUCH, TOO SOON.
and
WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES--DO KEEP ON TRYING.

With your help, your child will learn many new things.

By using these methods, you can make learning easy and fun for your child. He will learn to live happily with his family.

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